POLAR Opossites

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Summary

After being released from the BSHCI, Will Graham has had enough. He leaves, moving across the country and starting over.
But his neighbor is shockingly familiar.

Chapter 1

Will had been out of the BSHCI less than twenty-four hours and he had had enough.

Alana's stubborn arguments about Hannibal. Jack's texting him about a crime scene he wanted Will to look at, as if he hadn't just been locked up in that godforsaken hospital for months… Will was through.

He quit his job and put his dogs up for adoption, keeping only Winston, and packed up what few things he felt like keeping.

He didn't tell any of them where he was going, he saw no point, none of them would really care anyways.

He ended up on the other side of the country, in Montana. He found a nice cabin there, a lake for fishing, and a forest to hunt in. He would stay up there, fix motors, maybe write some papers. He didn't want to ever think about the BSU, the FBI, or Hannibal fucking Lecter, ever again.

Duncan watched as the small moving truck pulled up across the lake. A new neighbor. Huh… He took a drag on his cigarette and blew out a cloud of smoke. He wondered who his new neighbor would be. It was a small moving truck, so not a material person. Judging from the furniture he saw, it was a man.

He watched the truck get unloaded and leave. Then, maybe a half hour or so later, a truck pulled up and a brunet climbed out, followed by a brown and yellow dog. The man looked around and sighed, a cloud of air floating around his head before moving to the house, letting the dog in, and disappearing inside himself. Duncan wondered if he should try and do something neighborly to welcome him, but he wasn't sure what.

A few days later, he saw his neighbor outside again, chopping logs for his stove. After a few minutes, the man stopped, rolling his shoulder slightly as if trying to loosen a knot or something before he hung up the ax and went inside.

Duncan watched him, pondering this before he turned back to his rented movie.

Will drove into town the next day, picking up groceries and supplies for Winston's food. He asked at the store about wood delivery. He could cut some himself, but if his shoulder kept acting up when he did, he probably wouldn't have enough for winter.

The store wasn't very helpful on that front and he headed home, thinking he would have to grit and bear it or they wouldn't be warm enough. When he pulled up to his cabin, Will’s jaw dropped. There was a large stack of wood, split and piled under his deck. It took him a

minute before he finally pulled himself together and got out to take the groceries in, taking note of the footprints in the snow leading to his neighbor's cabin…

It was another week before Will actually met his neighbor. He was getting ready to go hunt when Winston barked happily and dashed to the neighbors yard, sniffing at a sandy colored French bulldog.

"Winston!" Will called, hurrying over, just as his neighbor stepped out on the porch and lit a cigarette.

"S-sorry," Will calls, finally catching Winston's attention. Winston trotted back to Will, whining softly and leaning toward the unfamiliar dog. "He's used to having more dogs around, I guess he got…" Will's voice stuttered, finishing weakly as he finally got a good look at his neighbor, "lonely…"

It can't- he wouldn't- no… No. It's not him. Will felt like the gears of his mind were freezing, gunked up by the similarities between his new neighbor and Hannibal. The shape of the man's face- his high cheekbones and dark eyes- as well as his height and build… *Similar, but not the same.* The hair was darker, and almost more salt than pepper, not to mention the mustache and grey day-old scruff. And Hannibal wouldn't be caught dead smoking. *It's not him.*

"I don't mind," the man said gruffly, taking a pull on the cigarette before continuing, "Rusty could use the company."

Will got the distinct feeling that the man himself wasn't too thrilled about the company, but he could understand that all too well.

"S-so… this is Rusty?" Will asked, kneeling and offering his hand to the dog to let him sniff.

Will's neighbor hummed affirmatively. Rusty was excited, his little tail wagging wildly, and Winston saw Will's motion as an invitation to sniff the other dog again, his own tail wagging happily.

Will smiled as the dogs became acquainted, looking up at the near mirror image of his former friend, he saw the man's eyes dart away. He had been watching Will.

"Uh, I'm Will," he said, not sure that he should move forward to shake his hand. The man seemed almost like a coiled spring that could move in an instant.

"Duncan," his neighbor said, giving a slight nod. He made no move to come any closer, but his eyes traveled to Will again, lingering on the hunting rifle slung on his shoulder.

Will's hand went to the strap of the gun, as if only now remembering it was there. "I was gonna see if I couldn't find a deer. Or maybe some ducks that haven't migrated yet." He wasn't totally sure why he was explaining it to this total stranger but the way he looked at the gun...

Duncan nodded again.

Will shifted slightly before figuring he might as well. "Thank you… for the wood, I mean…" He sighed. "You didn't have to do that but… it sure helped."

Duncan took another drag on his cigarette, looking toward the perfectly stacked wood, safe and dry under Will's porch. "The recoil not gonna bother your shoulder?" he asked suddenly, surprising Will.

"Oh, uh… no," Will said, shifting the gun and feeling strangely exposed. "One or two shots won't bother it too much. It's the repetitive motion that caused me trouble, is all."

Duncan nodded in understanding but didn't reply.

Will seemed to sense the conversation was at its close. He clicked his tongue for Winston, who came rather reluctantly. He turned to go before turning back again at a thought. "Can I… say thanks?"

Duncan raised his eyebrows at him. "Did you not?"

Will shrugged. "I've got whiskey at my place, if you ever wanted to join me for a drink…" Will was shocked at himself. *What if he thinks I'm coming onto him?*

Will watched as Duncan tensed. It was almost imperceptible- a slight tightening of his jaw, a twitch at the corner of his eye- but Will saw more than most.

"I'll think about it," Duncan said, eyes lingering on the gun again. He pointed into the trees. “There were some deer through there… few days ago, now.”

Will nodded, smiling in thanks. "Alright," he bent and gave Rusty a goodbye scratch before whistling to Winston and moving off again into the trees Duncan had indicated.

Duncan watched as his new neighbor, "Will", disappeared into the trees before he whistled for Rusty and stomped out his cigarette.

Once inside, he grabbed his laptop. He was connected to the Damocles system, so he did a bit of research. The man knew his way around a gun, that much was obvious to Duncan. There was an ease in the way the man carried the gun, not the careless ease of one who didn’t understand the dangers of firearms, but the ease of one familiar enough with the weapon in his hands.

The car’s license plate was from Virginia…

Up popped several news articles about the "Chesapeake Ripper"? As well as a "Special Agent Will Graham”…

A gunshot interrupted his thoughts, he looked out the window and watched Will drag home his prize, his dog happily following.

Duncan nodded slightly and sat back. Alright… maybe he could get to know his neighbor.

They danced around each other for the next few weeks, talking in passing or coincidentally bumping into each other at the diner in town, before Duncan knocked on Will's door. When Will opened it, Duncan held up an amber bottle sealed with red wax.

Will's eyes widened slightly. "Thanks," he said, carefully taking the bottle. "Come on in." He stepped back, holding the door open wider.

"You said you had some whiskey," Duncan said, stepping inside and looking around, "but I never got you a housewarming gift, so…"

The cabin was neat and orderly, not unlike Duncan's own, though Will had a bit more in the way of comfort than he did.

"Do you… wanna take off your coat?" Will offered. "I've got a spare peg," he added, motioning to the rack by the door where his own coat hung along with his fishing hat.

"Thank you," Duncan said, shedding his coat and hanging it up, trying to track the snow in as little as possible.

Will smiled. He moved over, putting another log on the fire and grabbing two glasses. "Sit wherever you like," he said.

Duncan looked around again, nodded, and sat on the couch by the fire.

Will sat with him, leaving enough distance that Duncan could be comfortable and smiling weakly, holding out a poured glass for him.

Duncan took it with a soft, "Thanks." He held it in his hands, studying the glass for a while.

Will raised his own slightly before taking a sip and sighing. "What made you change your mind?"

Duncan looked to him curiously. "I didn't change it," he said, "it just took a while to make it up."

Will chuckled. "When I first asked, you looked like I'd invited you to a trip to the dentist."

Duncan shrugged slightly. "I don't mind the dentist," he said, finally taking a sip of his drink.

Will shrugged. "Caution isn't a bad thing, and I probably was a little forward, but I'm glad you came."

Duncan nodded, looking around the room again. His eyes fell on the table under the window, covered in fishing lures. "You like to fish?" he asked, remembering the hat on the coat peg, too.

Will nodded. "Yeah, used to do it all the time. Kinda my safe space, you know?" He smiled reminiscently. "I had a stream near my old home… it was the best fishing spot…"

“What made you want to leave it behind?” Duncan asked, taking another, longer, drink.

Will looked at his drink for a long moment before saying softly, "I was betrayed…"

Duncan nodded. “That’ll do it.”

Will scoffed softly. "It's a bit more complicated than that but… yeah…"

Duncan nodded, looking to Will again. "You… want to talk about it?" he offered.

"Have you… heard of the Chesapeake Ripper?" He asked softly.

Duncan nodded. "I think I read something about it. They arrested someone, but turned out to be the wrong guy."

Will flinched slightly, but nodded. "I… know who he really is…"

"Probably lucky to be alive," Duncan said. "He knows you know?"

"He was my best friend…" Will said softly, then, before he knew it, he was telling his neighbor everything.

Duncan was an incredible listener, mostly quiet, nodding enough to show he was listening but not so much that Will felt like he was talking to a bobblehead. When he did speak, it was only to ask for clarification or reassure Will that he could go on or not, whatever he wanted.

Will took a swig from his whiskey, sighing. “And so I left.” He felt like he had sand in his throat. After going over a month with talking to no one but Winston, it was nice to get it all off his chest, but he’d been talking for what felt like hours without much stopping. Part of him was worried he’d bore Duncan, but his neighbor only nodded slowly, looking into his own glass as he processed all Will had told him.

“I’m being forced to retire on my fiftieth birthday,” Duncan finally said, once again surprising Will. “Company policy or some bull shit.” Despite them becoming friendly, Duncan still hadn’t told Will much about his life. Maybe after everything Will had said, Duncan felt like he had to reciprocate.

Will felt his curiosity grow, despite himself. “And… what exactly did you do?”

Duncan looked up from his glass slowly, his dark eyes boring into Will. “I… was in the funeral business,” he said, his eyes slipping away again. The hesitation was enough for Will to know there was more to it than that. Years of dealing with Hannibal’s innuendos and hidden jokes… he knew a cover story when he heard it.

After some thought, Will looked up from his own glass. "You're an assassin… right?" he asked softly.

Duncan sighed softly. “You see that?” he asked. Will had said he’d seen things others in his field had not. He wondered just how much of an open book he was to this man.

Will nodded slightly, looking at his drink again.

"You don't mind?" Duncan asked, most people found his job rather… well…

Will shook his head. "No… I don't."

"You worked for the FBI, catching killers," Duncan pointed out.

"And they arrested *me* as one of those killers." Will sighed. "My moral alignment has always been in the more gray spectrum… Besides, when you get thrown to the wolves by people who are supposed to have your back, your perspectives can shift." He looked at Duncan. "I mean, what would *you* do if your co-workers tried to kill you for no reason?"

Duncan met his gaze levely and spoke without hesitation. "Kill them first." That said, he looked down again. "When we first met, I could tell you knew how to handle your gun. Perhaps not your weapon of choice, but you were clearly capable with it. Thought you might be in my line of work, here for me. Then I saw your FBI history." He glanced at Will and away again, a tiny smile tugged at his lips, exaggerated by his mustache. "Still thought you might be here for me."

Will scoffed softly. "All I was doing was running from all my problems… but at least I got to meet you…"

That got a smile out of Duncan.

Soon, that became their ritual, every Friday, they would get together, share drinks and talk. Will always tried not to think about what he was like when he'd drank too much. Duncan seemed not to mind it, though. Some Fridays they would stay up into the wee hours of the morning, still drinking and talking, and Will would find himself snuggling in, getting too close… but Duncan never pushed him away. In fact, once Will had initiated the cuddling for the night, Duncan would wrap an arm around Will, leaving the other free to hold his glass. The second time it happened, he even ran his fingers through Will's dark curls as they chatted. He never pushed for more, but he never seemed bothered by the direction Will led them in.

"You should talk more," Will said suddenly on one of these nights. He was curled against Duncan's warm side and tracing the lines on his shirt idly. "You have a nice voice."

Duncan chuckled at that. "Maybe I just don't have much to say."

Will pouted. "Well, I think your voice is nice...you should use it."

Duncan chuckled again, shaking his head. "My voice is old and rough," he countered. "You only like it because you're American."

Will sat up slightly. "What do you mean?"

"Americans love 'forigne' accents," Duncan said. "Not a bad thing, really."

"I think your voice is still nice." Will snuggled down again. "It's soothing…"

Duncan chuckled again. “If I ever think of something to say, I’ll say it.”

"I'll think of something." Will said, smiling slightly, "Maybe I'll buy you a book of poetry."

Duncan rolled his eyes. “I didn’t figure you for a sap.”

Will snorted. "I'm not, but the thought of you reading Robert Frost isn't unappealing."

Duncan nodded, finishing off his glass and setting it aside. “Fire And Ice or the one about the yellow wood?” he asked, chuckling.

"I'm more of a Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening type," Will said with a chuckle, "but I'd take any you wanted to recite."

Duncan chuckled. “You get the book, and I’ll read it.”

"No you won't," Will said, smiling.

"I might," Duncan said.

Will chuckled, snuggling down again and humming softly.

This continued for another week or two, drinking and cuddling, until finally, Will asked.

"Where are you putting it anyways?" Will grumbled. Duncan never showed effects of getting drunk besides maybe a reddening of his cheekbones.

“Putting what?” Duncan asked, chuckling.

Will frowned again, he was determined to get to the bottom of this. He climbed closer, not realizing he was now straddling Duncan’s legs, and began patting him down. "Are you stashing it in a bag or something?"

That got a reaction out of him. Duncan, always in control of himself, flushed a deep red. “Will, what are you looking for?” he asked, holding very still as the younger man searched him.

Will looked up at him. "How come you don't get drunk?"

Duncan raised his eyebrows at that. “I *am* drunk.”

Will shook his head. "Then how come you don't- y-you…" He slowed to a stop, seeming to realize where he was and blushing himself.

“Everyone gets affected differently, Will,” Duncan said, his voice low. He still wasn’t hardly moving, but Will also realized he hadn’t pushed him away, either.

Will looked up, making eye contact and holding it. Duncan met his eyes, his breathing shallow and his heart racing. Slowly, carefully, Duncan reached up to brush some of Will’s curls back. They’d grown longer, wild, and often fell in his eyes. Duncan swallowed,

nervous, and wet his lips, the tip of his tongue just visible as it darted quickly over his thin lips.

Will was still a moment longer before reaching out slowly and tracing Duncan's cheek bone with his fingers. Duncan's lips parted slightly, taking in a sharp breath as he tried to calm himself down.

"Will," Duncan murmured. Will realized they were closer together, and he couldn't quite remember which of them had moved.

Will's eyes darted up to Duncan's again, asking, questioning. *Does he want this, too?*

Duncan's pupils were wide as he met Will's eyes. Before Will could decide if it was desire or the dim light causing it, Duncan had closed the distance, his lips brushing against Will's gently. Will's breath hitched slightly, releasing in a soft moan as they separated. Will looked up at Duncan again, eyes wide.

Neither of them could ever tell you who moved first after that, all there was was the heated kiss as they pressed close together, their drinks forgotten in favor of fingers threading through hair and pulling each other closer.

Eventually, too soon in both their opinions, they had to part to breathe.

Duncan, still breathing hard, had his lips on Will's jaw, trailing down his neck, and tickling him with his mustache. Will shivered, moaning softly. He tilted his head to give him more room as his eyes closed, enjoying the feeling. Will shivered as Duncan's lips traced over the sensitive skin at the base of his neck, the hand in Duncan's hair tightening as he moaned.

Duncan's teeth grazed over Will's pulse, letting out a low groan. His fingers tightened in Will's curls, his other hand sliding down Will's back to pull him closer, his hips rutting up against the friction. Will shivered, moaning Duncan's name.

In a whirl of movement, Duncan stood, carrying Will over to the bed, still kissing at his neck. Will gasped softly, gripping at Duncan's neck for fear of falling.

Duncan sat Will down on the bed, his hands moving from his hips- where he'd held him up- sliding up under Will's shirt. His hands were rough, calloused and work worn, against Will's stomach and sides, gentle yet firm and eager.

Will moaned, quickly pulling his shirt up and off, leaning up to kiss Duncan again. Duncan's hands roamed over Will's exposed skin, kissing him back eagerly. Will pressed closer, his fingers tangling in Duncan's hair as he kissed him just as eagerly.

Duncan carefully pushed Will back, forcing him down onto the pillows. He kissed down along Will's neck again, pausing to graze his teeth over the soft spot at the base of his neck, barely resisting the urge to sink his teeth in before kissing on along Will's collar bone. All the while, his hands roamed up Will's sides, over his shoulders and chest, and down again.

Will shivered, moaning softly as he tried to pull Duncan's sweater off.

Duncan pulled back, placing his hand over Will's. "Wait…" he said.

Will pulled back, looking worried.

"What if you don't like what you see?" Duncan asked softly.

Will shook his head. "It's alright… if you don't want to…"

Duncan hesitated a moment, then pulled back, pulling his sweater off and dropping it aside.

Will's eyes widened slightly, reaching up, his fingers ghosted over the scars gently. "You've survived so much…"

Duncan shivered, his eyes slipping closed. "You have, too," he murmured.

Will's hand stopped at the large scar on his side. "Does it hurt?" he asked softly.

Duncan peeked down at him. "Nah," he said. "Bit of metal still in there… but I don't really notice it, usually."

Will nodded slowly before moving forward and kissing each scar he could find gently, whispering against each, "Survived." Duncan shivered at each kiss, threading his fingers in Will's curls when he could reach him. Once Will had finished, he moved up to Duncan's face again, meeting his eyes. "Now, survive for me," he murmured softly, leaning in and kissing him.

Duncan moaned into the kiss, pulling Will close against him. Will moaned, tangling his hands in Duncan's hair again.

After they kissed until needing air, Duncan gently pushed Will back onto the pillows, kissing along his jaw and down his neck and across his shoulders, kissing gently at Will's bullet scar from "Uncle Jack" as he went. Will shivered, gasping softly for breath as he watched Duncan as he started trailing his kisses southward.

Will gasped softly, trying to sit up, to protest. Sure, he had done this a bit in college but… was this really happening?

Duncan stopped, pulling back to meet Will's eyes. "You don't want to?"

"I do," Will said quickly. "God, yes I want to but-" He looked away, biting his lip slightly. "It's been a… long time…"

Duncan reached up, gently caressing Will's cheek, his thumb coming to tease Will's lip out from between his teeth. "We don't have to do it all tonight… We have time. We can go as fast or as slow as you like." His thumb traced over Will's lower lip, as if trying to smooth away the marks left by his teeth. "It's probably best we get certain things before we go that far, anyways. Condoms, lube…" He nodded, clearly already making a shopping list in his mind. "In the meantime," he leaned in to kiss Will again, "if you'll let me," another kiss, "I'd like to make you feel very good," and another.

"Yes…" Will managed softly, "yes… please."

Duncan smiled, his hands trailing down Will's chest and stomach, going straight for the fastenings of his jeans. He began his trail of kisses downward as his hands pulled Will's pants down a bit, his fingers playing at the hem of his boxers.

Will moaned softly, his fingers tangling in Duncan's hair. It had been a long time since this had happened to him, since someone had wanted to *pleasure* him. Duncan moaned softly in appreciation, clearly liking Will's hands in his hair. He nosed gently at the elastic of the boxers.

Will shivered slightly, moaning. Duncan mouthed his bulge through the boxers, humming happily when he felt him twitch and grow harder. He pulled the boxers down, taking a moment to take in the sight, his hands cradling his cock and cupping his balls like some kind of treasure, before slowly taking him into his mouth.

Will gasped softly, his hand tightened in Duncan's hair as he tried to keep his hips from bucking up, "God- Duncan!"

Duncan chuckled softly, humming as he slowly took him all the way before swallowing around him. Will cried out, his back arching into the feeling, grabbing at the sheets tightly as he gripped Duncan's hair. Duncan's eyes slipped closed, bobbing his head. One hand toyed with Will's balls while the other ran soothingly over Will's thigh.

Will quivered under him, moaning softly, his breath already picking up as he tried to loosen his grip on Duncan's hair. Duncan looked up at him, watching Will's face as he raised up, his tongue flicking across the slit of Will's tip before dropping again to swallow around all of him.

Will yelped, arching up at the feeling. *Yep… definitely been a long time.*

Duncan chuckled softly before pulling back slowly, sucking as he went.

Will shivered, his hand tightening in Duncan's hair as he moaned.

Duncan pulled back, blowing gently down Will's wet cock and making him whimper.

Will gripped at Duncan's hair, pulling him up into a deep kiss.

Will should have known Duncan would be experienced, he probably used it for cover on jobs and such, but damn, Will felt like a bumbling newbie, and honestly he kinda was, but Duncan seemed to leave Will breathless and quivering with every touch.

"D-Duncan…" Will gasped out, after what felt like hours of sweet torture.

"Hmm?" Duncan questioned, making Will jump and moan again with the vibrations through his cock.

"I'm getting close!" Will cried.

Duncan nodded, his eyes soft and encouraging as he pressed down again, sucking deeply.

Will came with a shout, gasping and quivering through the first orgasm he had had in ages.

Duncan slowly pulled off, rubbing Will’s thighs gently and talking to Will softly until Will’s brain drifted back to conscious thought.

Duncan then got a warm wash cloth and wiped Will clean before climbing under the blankets with him and pulling him close.

Will sighed softly, snuggling as close as he could, Duncan was strong, but not as lean as Hannibal, giving him a nice tummy to cuddle.

Will yawned widely and smiled sleepily at the assassin.

Duncan smiled back, stroking Will's curls gently until he fell asleep.

Chapter 2

Will and Duncan grew closer as time went on, days and weeks of late fall chill and the promise of ice fishing together, (Duncan couldn't say no to the sparkling excitement in Will's eyes).

They would go to town together, run errands, then eat at the diner there before going home, Rusty and Winston were getting closer too, playing and romping together and often falling asleep together on the rug by the fire, Will often had Rusty stay at his cabin, as he didn't want to be without Winston.

One day, Will and Duncan were going shopping, Will didn't like the shopping, the woman running the store was such a nosey chatterbox, talking about anything and everything in as few breaths as possible.

This time, she was talking about how this person had a mouse problem or that person found that missing hiker, then about the new swings at the school.

"You know," the woman said, actually seeming to pause for breath for once as she bagged the groceries, "you two should volunteer at the elementary school. I'm sure they'd love some lectures by you both."

Will looked at Duncan, raising an eyebrow. "You want… us… to talk to a bunch of kids?" he asked, shaking his head in disbelief.

"Well sure!' The woman went on, "They're always looking for people with different careers and such to talk about their experiences, helps the kids gain perspective."

"I… don't think," Will said, shaking his head again. His life hadn't exactly been 'kid friendly' and he had no idea how he would frame it in a way that could be.

"Well, why don't you think on it," she said cheerfully. "It's not like the school's going anywhere." She chuckled at her own joke and handed them their bags.

Will sighed as they moved out to the car. "Should… we give it a try?"

"I don't know how to talk to kids," Duncan said. He had a thoughtful gleam in his eye that Will recognized. He had a pattern, Will was realizing, of denying interest in something before doing it immediately. *I don't need dessert* , right before ordering the cobbler or some pie at the diner.

Will shrugged. "Neither do I… wanna do it anyways?"

Duncan glanced down the road, thoughtfully. "What would you talk about?"

Will sighed. "You have that look in your eyes, the one that says, 'Fuck it, let's be contrary'."

Duncan’s lips quirked up in his half smile. “Maybe… so what will you talk about?” he asked again, clearly changing the phrasing of the question.

Will hummed thoughtfully. "Well, my usual ‘Everyone has thought about killing someone, one way or another’ might be a bit much for kids." He chuckled. "Probably just a demonstration on profiling or something."

Duncan nodded.

Will realized they’d passed the car and were still walking down the street. “The school’s not far,” Duncan said when he saw Will looking back toward the car.

Will nodded, "Here," he said, taking the bags, "I'll drop these in the car and meet you there."

Duncan looked down, as if only now remembering the bags in their hands. “Oh, right.” He took a few more steps before deciding to wait for Will. It wouldn’t take him long, and he’d rather walk together anyways.

Will put the bags away and jogged back, smiling. "You didn't have to wait, but thanks."

Duncan shrugged. “It’s not hard to find, but I’d rather you not get lost.”

Will nodded, "Alright." He said softly.

They took another few steps before Will took Duncan’s hand. Duncan glanced down at their hands, as if surprised to find them together. He smiled, giving Will’s a gentle squeeze as they continued on.

The teacher at the school seemed surprised and delighted when they offered to talk to the kids. *We'll change that tune in a hurry…* Will thought wryly.

They agreed on a date later that week and headed back home. Duncan seemed excited, despite himself.

Will chuckled softly. "I can't wait to see what you do," he said. He at least slightly regretted those words when he saw the box of visual aids Duncan packed. "Is… that knife sharp?" He asked softly.

Duncan picked up the kukri, testing the edge. “Yes.”

"And… You're taking it to show kids?" Will asked softly.

Duncan sheathed it and added it to his large brown paper bag. "Mhm."

Will sighed softly, shaking his head slightly. "Impossible…" he murmured fondly.

Duncan looked up from his bag. “Hm?”

Will smiled, leaning in and kissing him. "You're adorable."

Duncan hummed happily, though when Will pulled back he looked a bit bewildered. “I don’t think anyone’s ever called me *that* before.”

"Get used to it." Will laughed.

They went to the school; Will went first, telling them about the FBI, how they used science to track down the people they were searching for, and how evidence was important in catching bad guys.

Then it was Duncan’s turn. Will got roped into assisting him, all the while he watched the teacher’s face. Duncan seemed not to notice her or Will’s apprehension as he passed the kukri to the children, then the photos of a dead body. Will listened to the children's questions, seeing how Duncan reacted to each, knowing he was remembering things.

As they left, Will took Duncan’s hand gently. "They really enjoyed that…" he said softly.

Duncan smiled. “Good.”

Will chuckled softly, they got back home before Duncan came over, handing Will a wrapped package.

"What's this?" Will asked softly.

"Just open it," Duncan said, rolling his eyes.

Will smiled slightly, pulling the wrapping paper off and opening the case. He chuckled when he saw the gun nestled there. "Thanks, Duncan," he said softly, smiling up at the assassin. "It's wonderful."

"I'm sure you know how to shoot it, but…" Duncan showed his Hello name badge, "I am a teacher now."

Will chuckled. "I could use a refresher."

Duncan practically beamed, glad that Will appreciated his small joke.

They set up a small range and Duncan showed Will how to use the gun. It seemed he did need the lesson after all; this gun had more kick than the handgun he used to use. Duncan showed him a stance that helped reduce the effect on his shoulder, as well.

Will smiled as they moved back to the cabins for hot chocolate. "Thank you," he said softly. "That was nice."

Duncan nodded, smiling to himself.

Once inside, Will told Duncan about his days in New Orleans and how he hurt his arm before Jack had shot him.

“That explains why the repetitive motion bothered it,” Duncan said, nodding knowingly. “The shoulder and the knee are the most complicated joints in the body, the hardest to

heal…” He shrugged. "I could rub it for you, if you want."

Will looked at him with a raised eyebrow.

Duncan chuckled. "I'm no stranger to injuries. I've taken a few physical therapy classes. I’m no doctor, but it could help."

"Sure," Will said softly, a slight pink in his cheeks.

Duncan smiled and they sat on the couch, he took Will's wrist, moving his arm to bend at the elbow, tucking it behind his back and placing his palm to the shoulder, pressing gently.

Will moaned softly as tension started to ease.

After holding that stretch for a moment, Duncan let go of Will’s arm and pressed his thumbs to either side of Will’s spine and worked gentle circles into Will's shoulders.

"Oh god… Duncan…" Will managed, his eyes slipping closed as his back relaxed.

"There we go," Duncan murmured. "How's that feeling?"

Will sighed. "You keep that up and I'll turn into a puddle," he said, sighing again.

“That good, huh?” Duncan said with a chuckle.

"Mm hmm," Will said, nodding.

Duncan started massaging again, pressing into the muscles gently and forcing the knots to fade. Will moaned loudly, his head falling forward as he sighed.

“Make sure you drink lots of water after this,” Duncan advised.

Will made a soft noise before flopping back against Duncan’s chest. Duncan nuzzled his nose against Will’s neck.

Will hummed softly, reaching up to stroke Duncan’s cheekbone. "I'm definitely gonna have to keep you," he murmured.

Duncan chuckled. "I can live with that."

Will hummed again. "Good," he said softly, leaning up and kissing him, "because I always keep my promises. You're stuck with me Duncan Vizla."

Later, once Will was asleep, Duncan got up, opening his laptop and filling out some paperwork. Sighing, he closed the computer again, looking at Will.

Will shifted slightly in his sleep, sighing softly. Duncan admired the way Will’s pale skin looked in the moonlight, contrasting so much against his dark curls.

Winston snuffled at Duncan’s hand, having come over from his place on the hearthrug when Duncan had gotten up. Duncan scratched behind his ears for a bit before returning to the bed

and curling up with Will. Will woke slightly, smiling softly and snuggling in before falling back asleep. Duncan hummed softly, settling in to sleep.

Men, all armed, chasing him down through the streets. The job had gone bad, he had to get out. The rookie had screwed him over and left him, but he wouldn't roll over and die. He-

A hand on his shoulder, pulling him. He spun, grabbing the perpetrator by the throat, slamming them to the wall.

"Duncan…"

The man knew his name? He couldn't let that information get out. He-

"D-Duncan…"

A gentle touch across his cheek bone. He tried to focus. Wait… was it-?

His vision began to clear, the enemy soldier melting away as he blinked, replaced by blue eyes and dark curls, his pale skin and bright eyes almost glowing in the moonlight through the window.

Duncan had Will pinned to the bed, hands around his throat. Will didn't even seem scared. He was talking quietly, his voice slightly horse with the pressure on his windpipe, but he kept talking. It wasn't anything fancy, he just talked about the lake and how he wanted to fish with Duncan, what Rusty and Winston had done the other day, a thought to add something to the shopping list, and every now and then, he gently touched Duncan's cheek or jaw, repeating his name and telling him it was alright.

After what felt like hours, Duncan managed to take his hands away.

"Will," Duncan said, shaking his head and sitting down hard on the bed, staring at his own hands. "Will, I…"

Will was there as soon as Duncan let him up. "It's alright…" he said softly, draping himself over Duncan's shoulders, "it's ok…"

Duncan shivered, but he didn't pull away. His head bowed, and Will could tell he'd closed his eyes, as he reached up to gently hold Will's arm that was wrapped around his chest.

Will didn't press, he just stayed there, soothing how he could without causing more triggers. After a few minutes, curiosity got the better of him, and he asked, "Where were you?" He kept his voice soft. "If you want to talk," he said, "if not, I don't want to push."

"Israel... last time I worked with someone else… some rookie shithead… he screwed up…"

Will nodded slowly. "I see…" He was silent for a long moment. "Are… you worried about it because you're opening up to me?" he asked softly.

Duncan shook his head firmly. "No. No, it was just another nightmare." He raised Will's hand from his shoulder and kissed it. "Opening up to you doesn't worry me." He turned to face Will again, gently cradling his face with one of his large hands. "The only thing of you that worries me… is that I might lose you. That it might be my own fault."

Will smiled, leaning into his touch. "I'm not going anywhere, Duncan," he murmured softly.

"Good," Duncan said, moving forward to kiss him.

The next day, Will joined Duncan on the porch while he had his cigarette.

"Can I have some?" Will asked.

"Smoking's bad for you," Duncan said, taking another drag.

Will chuckled, "You smoke," he pointed out.

"Figured it wouldn't kill me," Duncan said. "My… old line of work." He made a sour face, shaking his head. He was still having trouble accepting that that part of his life would soon be over.

Will nodded, taking the hand not holding the cigarette. "Yeah…"

Duncan looked down at their hands, slipping his fingers between Will's and holding him tightly. Will smiled gently, squeezing his hand gently and looking out at the water, no words were necessary.

One day, Will came over to Duncan's with a large amber bottle, smiling.

"What's all this?" Duncan asked, smiling.

Will's smile turned a bit sheepish. "Well… it's the first anniversary… A year ago today was when you first came over for drinks."

Duncan's smile widened. "Has it really been that long? Feels like only a few days."

Will chuckled softly. "Yeah."

"I didn't get you anything," Duncan said.

Will pushed his shoulder slightly, laughing, "Do you want the booze or not, asshole?"

Duncan chuckled, catching Will's wrist and pulling him close. "So long as I can have you, too," he murmured against Will's ear.

Will shivered slightly. "Of course you can," he said softly.

Duncan chuckled, nipping gently at Will's ear.

Will moaned softly. "You're gonna make me drop the bottle," he murmured.

“Well, that would be a shame,” Duncan said, finally letting go of Will and pulling back. “Come on in.”

Will smiled, moving inside, barely setting the bottle down before he was pulled down into Duncan’s lap.

Will chuckled softly. "Booze later then, huh?"

Duncan hummed affirmatively, nuzzling into Will’s neck. Will squirmed slightly, giggling as Duncan’s mustache tickled his skin. Duncan chuckled softly and nipped at Will’s ear again.

Will jumped slightly, chuckling. "Tease…"

Duncan chuckled. “Missed you,” he murmured against Will’s ear.

Will chuckled again, the mustache tickling at his ear. "I missed you, too," he said softly, reaching to stroke Duncan’s cheek gently. "How was the doctor’s visit?"

“Healthy as a horse,” Duncan said.

Will chuckled, knowing Duncan probably omitted a few points from the doctors notice. "Did you make it to your colleague's funeral?"

Duncan tensed slightly. “No… but I talked to my contact. It was a hit, the fourth of ours in the past month. Russians hired a Mexican hitman…” He took a slow, deep breath. “She wants me to take him out.”

—

Hannibal played a haunting melody on the harpsichord, deep in thought. This was becoming tedious… He had so enjoyed his games with Will. Now that he had disappeared, he found the regular life he regained rather… boring.

He was tired of Alana's clingy, needy nature and Bedelia's continued jibes and manipulation attempts. Jack had also begun to become a nuisance. He had begun therapy with Hannibal in the wake of his wife's continued cancer fight, and he seemed to think Hannibal could replace Will.

The song stopped on a sour note and Hannibal sighed; he shouldn't have pushed quite so hard. He wanted Will to become all he could be, but he had pushed too hard, drove Will away. He thought Will would return, the lure of unfinished business enough to draw him back in, but no such luck. He had simply vanished.

Rising from his seat, he moved to pour himself a glass of wine. *What is to be done*...

A knock at the door made Hannibal sigh, but he went and answered it. "Jack," he greeted, "to what do I owe the pleasure?"

Jack was silent for a long moment before saying, "We found Will."

Chapter 3

"Is it something you need to do?" Will asked, "You've already done so many jobs, do you really need this one, too?"

“They’re not going to let it go quietly,” Duncan said, sighing.

Will nodded slowly. "But, if you're about to retire… wouldn't it make more sense to give the job to someone who's starting? Give them experience?" He touched Duncan's arm gently. "If you want to take the job, then do it. I know you can, but only do it if it's what you want. You're about to retire and they can deal with it."

Duncan sighed. “I liked my job, Will. I know most people find that immoral, and illegal, but… I am going to miss it. I can’t help that.”

Will nodded. "I get it, I do… and if you wanted to take the job for a last big bang before retirement, I get that, too. We'll be here when you get back."

Duncan frowned slightly. “We?”

Will looked pointedly at Winston curled on the rug and the little bulldog currently drooling over Duncan’s shoe.

"Ah," Duncan nodded.

Will chuckled, leaning in and kissing Duncan’s cheek. "I'm sure you'll figure it out."

Duncan hummed affirmatively, leaning closer to plant a kiss on Will's lips. Will smiled, still loving the tickle of his mustache.

"Have you ever wanted to travel?" Duncan asked when he finally pulled back.

Will chuckled in surprise. "When I was young, yeah," he said with a soft smile, "but it was beaten into me pretty quickly that we didn't have the money for that and never would." He shrugged.

“I have money,” Duncan said. “I’d be getting more.” It dawned on Will that Duncan was offering to bring Will along for the job.

Will's eyes widened. "A-are you serious?" he asked in shock.

“Only if you’d want to,” Duncan said quickly. “You don’t need to do anything, I don’t need help on the job, but… I like your company, Will.”

Will beamed. "I'd love to." The smile faltered slightly. "But… I don't know *any* Belarusian…"

“What about Russian? Most people in Belarus speak both,” Duncan said knowingly.

Will shook his head. "English and Creole French for me," he said. "Maybe a word or two in Lithuanian…" he amended.

That raised Duncan's eyebrows for a moment, but he nodded. "Well, I can do the talking… be your translator."

Will laughed.

"If you'd rather not…" Duncan said, misunderstanding, worrying.

"Finally," Will said, "a reason to get you to talk!"

Duncan let out a weak chuckle. "We'll have to find someone to watch the dogs…"

Will shrugged. "The woman at the general store has had a poster up about a dog sitter the last few weeks. We can look into it."

Duncan nodded. "Always so observant," he praised.

Will chuckled. "Old habits," he said before self doubt makes him frown, "Are… you sure you want me to go?"

Duncan threaded his fingers into Will's hair. "I enjoy your company. I'd like you with me, if that's what you want, too."

Will smiled, "Absolutely."

Duncan ended up needing the help after all. His target was in a high scale hotel penthouse. Duncan booked one of the other rooms and taught Will enough Belarusian that he could call the front desk about a problem so they would call the 'handyman' to fix it. Then Will was to stay in the room until Duncan got him.

He did as Duncan asked, and waited. He waited through the yells and the shots. He waited while there was soft talking, then he heard Duncan right outside the door, talking on the phone.

"I want the second half of my payment sent over within twenty-four hours. Vivian, someone set me up over here and you better pray you had nothing to do with it. Don't ever contact me again."

He knocked and Will opened the door, seeing the target Duncan had come for, spreadeagled on the wall opposite, a bullet in his head and nails in… other places. Will's mind immediately started reconstructing the scene without him meaning to.

"Let's go," Duncan said softly, snapping Will from his thoughts as Duncan gently took his arm and they moved for the elevator.

Will had kept the one suit he had let Hannibal talk him into buying, thinking he might need it someday. He was wearing it now. The charcoal gray suit still fit him perfectly, which surprised him honestly, but he didn't dwell. Right now, he knew they had to be

inconspicuous, so he summoned all he could remember of Hannibal's demeanor, straightening his back and keeping a look of cool indifference on his face as they left the hotel. His hand itched, wanting reach out and hold Duncan's hand, but he wasn't sure how similarly Belarus treated its gay citzens as Russia, so he kept his hands by his sides.

Once they were away and Duncan's shoulders relaxed, at least as much as Will figured he *did* relax on jobs, Will asked softly, "What happened?"

"In the room, he had a file with information about me, a photo," Duncan said softly. "A contract. This 'hit' was a set up, meant to end with my death, not his."

Will's eyes widened. "What?" He fought the urge to look back at the hotel. "How would he have gotten it? I thought your files were-"

"Whoever ordered the hit has connections," Duncan said softly. "Friends in high places… or is high on the ladder themselves…" He shook his head, frowning.

Will looked up at him, worried. "Are you ok?"

"I want answers," Duncan admitted, "but I'd settle for being left alone."

Will nodded. "Alright…" They got another room across the city for the night before boarding a flight home.

They had been home another week when Duncan made a solo trip to town. On the way back, he saw a woman bending over the engine of a garishly blue bug. He slowed down, pulling off to the side in front of her car, rolling down the window to speak with her.

She came up, smiling flirtingly at him. "Hi."

"What's the problem?" he asked, glancing back toward her car.

"Do I look like a mechanic?" she asked, rather bluntly. When he didn't respond, she added, "I don't know, it just… died."

"Did you call a tow truck?"

She laughed weakly. "My phone's dead, too. Could I… charge it in your car?"

"Not in this car," Duncan said with a tiny smile.

She looked at his old beat up car and sighed, muttering, "Goddamn it." She looked at him, biting at her finger in what was either nerves or another attempt and flirting. "Do you live around here?"

He could tell something was off, but Will's general good nature had started to rub off on Duncan, so he let her climb in and brought her home. Luckily, Will was watching Rusty, so if something did go wrong…

"Thanks for helping me out," the woman said, pulling Duncan from his thoughts.

“Welcome,” he said. Manners, and all that.

“The soonest they can come out is ten in the morning,” she said, straightening from her seductive pose at the table. She looked out the window. “Wow, look at that storm.”

Duncan frowned, eyes lingering on the lights of Will’s cabin. “You hungry?” he asked, taking a swig from his beer.

"Mhm," she said, smiling at him again.

After they ate, Duncan moved to grab some blankets from his room.

"You get the couch," he said, setting a blanket across the back of the couch and moving to sit in his chair, unlacing his boots.

"You're cute for an older guy," she said, smiling at him.

Duncan continued unlacing his boots, not looking up.

"I said I'd never fuck anyone older than my dad," she said, giving him that flirty look again.

Duncan finally looked up at her. "Good. Enjoy the couch."

Chapter 4

Will looked across the way as he let the dogs out to romp. It was snowing out there, but he could make out Duncan in the window of his place… He could also see the woman he was with…

Will wondered who she was, but he shrugged and turned away, moving back to his room to read while he let the dogs tire themselves out.

Soft pops, *gunfire*, and the rushed footsteps outside was all the warning Will had before someone kicked in his door. He jumped up, reaching for his gun, the one Duncan had given him.

The man that rushed in was small, fast, but surprisingly strong. His wild red hair and beard was distracting, but Will put up a pretty good fight. Before he could get the upper hand, though, the man had grabbed one of the logs for the fire and hit Will upside the head, knocking him out cold.

Duncan went to the hotel room with the key he'd gotten off the big guy, but found only a drugged-out-of-her-mind blue haired girl. He turned, ready to leave.

"Alexi? Is that you?" She mumbled, "Did you get the neighbor?"

Duncan froze, turning back to her. "What neighbor?" he asked, though his sinking heart already knew.

"I don't know…" the girl sighed, shaking her head, "that neighbor guy the old man was spending all that time with… the hell do I know?"

By the time she finished, Duncan was already gone.

Duncan drove back to Will's cabin, moving up to the door, he reached for the handle just as a floorboard creaked. Duncan swung the door open, gun out and aimed. The man in the cabin turned, a scalpel half raised in his hand, almost as if he intended to throw it. They both froze, staring as if into a warped mirror.

Duncan was the first to speak. "You're Lecter," he said, not a question.

Lecter raised an eyebrow. "I'm afraid you have me at a disadvantage, Mister…?"

Duncan's eyes scanned the room, noting the toppled table and the gun on the floor. He felt like the world was swaying, like the deck of a yacht in a storm. He stepped forward, raising his gun again- he hadn't realized he'd lowered it- and said, "Where is he?"

"I could ask you the same," Lecter said. "This is what I arrived to."

Duncan shook his head, trying to focus. “The girl,” he muttered, turning and moving for the door.

The scalpel hit the door frame beside Duncan’s head. Will had been right about the man’s skill. “You barge into his home waving a gun about,” Lecter said. “You either know what’s going on, or you’re a part of it. I want answers.”

Duncan turned slowly to look at Lecter, sizing him up slowly. "Unless I miss my guess," he said softly, "Will's been kidnapped and the ones responsible are going to get away because you’re stalling me." Lecter opened his mouth, but Duncan cut him off, adding, "Come if you want," before turning and moving back to the car.

He froze when he saw the girl standing in the snow with Winston and Rusty at her feet. She had long, straight dark hair, large eyes that seemed to be afraid or lost, and a scarf that seemed more decoration than warm. She was pale enough, Duncan might have mistaken her for a ghost if not for the cloud of breath around her. Before he had his gun half raised, Lecter had stepped up behind him and put a hand on his wrist.

“I’d rather you not do that,” Lecter said, the threat clear in his voice. “Abigail,” he said more loudly. Duncan knew that name, Will had told him everything… The girl straightened, very much alive, looking up and stared at Duncan for a moment before looking to Lecter. “I need you to stay here and care for Will’s dogs.”

Duncan didn’t feel like correcting the other man. Someone needed to look after Rusty anyway. Despite everything, a part of him was glad the dogs had gotten outside and avoided the scuffle in both cabins.

“O-ok,” Abigail said. “Where… is Will?”

“We’re going to find him,” Duncan said, turning toward the car. They were wasting time.

They dove back as fast as Duncan dared in the snow, but by the time they got there, the room was empty.

Lecter searched the room quickly, shaking his head. “There isn’t much,” he announced. “A large group of them, perhaps six in total, but you’ve already taken out most of them.”

Duncan nodded. “I know who we can get answers from.”

Lecter looked at him, raising an eyebrow. "You know who did this," he said softly.

"No," Duncan said, getting back in his truck. "I have suspicions, and right or wrong, he'll know where I should be looking."

Lecter looked at Duncan, appraising. "You want me to come as well?"

“I’m not taking you back to the cabin,” Duncan said, closing his door.

Lecter raised an eyebrow slightly before climbing into the car.

They rode in silence for a time. Eventually, Duncan pulled out his cigarette pack, checking how many he had left. Lecter raised an eyebrow slightly, but he didn’t comment.

Eventually they arrived at an old bar. Inside, an older man was singing karaoke while the audience was a mix of cheers and jeers.

Lecter moved away from Duncan, watching from a distance.

Porter talked to Duncan, explaining how Blut had been killing off retirees before they would receive their pension, since there was a clause in their contract that said if they didn't have a beneficiary then the company would get their benefits.

Duncan realized the transaction he had completed a few weeks ago might have caused much of this. He stood, thanking Porter for the intel.

Porter held out his hand to shake. Once he had Duncan's hand, he slapped a poison pad on the back of his hand.

Duncan shoved the pad off quickly, but it was too late. He had his gun out, even as he stumbled back, getting off a wild shot as he went down, knocking over a table with him.

"One too many drinks," he heard Porter say, then a phone call.

The last thing Duncan saw before it went black was Lecter watching him from the corner silently. When he woke again, it was dark and cold; he was shirtless on a tiled floor, chains at his wrists and ankles.

Some soldiers came in, turning on the lights and using the chains to lift him up off the ground til his feet dangled a foot or so from the tiles.

The doors opened again, and in walked Blut.

Duncan took a slow, steadying breath, waiting.

Blut moved over to a small stair and climbed up to be closer to Duncan’s eye level

Duncan watched him silently.

Blut looked up at Duncan. "You killed Hilde…" he said softly, "I will enjoy killing you… but I don't need to yet. You only need to die before your birthday… that gives us three days…"

"Which one was she?" Duncan asked. His tongue felt heavy… thick. "The one who tried to fuck me? Or the scared little girl?"

Blut struck Duncan hard across the face with a growl. Duncan hardly flinched, staring back at the man who had been his boss.

Blut held up a group of photos. Duncan focused on the pictures, half wishing he hadn't. The pictures were of Will. He looked barely conscious as Blut posed next to him or with his arm

around him, grinning all the while. With those in his mind, it would be harder to withdraw into himself, harder to ignore what came next.

"Music please," Blut said and the sound of bagpipes filled the room, then the pain began.

After two days worth of Blut's treatment, Duncan lay on the floor, his badly cut eye throbbing, when movement caught his attention. He looked up to see Lecter creeping towards him.

“How…?” Duncan asked softly, his voice thick.

Lecter raised an eyebrow slightly. "It's not that difficult, once you know routines and patterns." He moved forward to help get the chains off before he froze, eyes on the pictures scattered around.

Duncan looked over. “He’s at the mansion…”

For a moment, Duncan thought Lecter was going to leave him there and go look for Will, but then he knelt and began picking the locks on the cuffs.

Duncan groaned, sitting up and rubbing his ankles, trying to get feeling to his feet so he could walk without falling over.

"They'll be here soon," Lecter said softly.

"I can handle them," Duncan said, already forming a plan. "You might want to get out… I can't control where they might shoot…"

Lecter raised an eyebrow again before nodding and slipping into the shadows again.

Duncan took a deep breath and laid back down, arranging the shackles to look like they were still in place. The soldiers had guns, so he needed to get at least one of them close.

The guards came in, bringing the record player and such for Blut's arrival. One moved to Duncan, grabbing his arms to pull him up, only to have the shackles fall to the floor with a crash. The next few minutes were a blur, Duncan let his instincts take the reigns, Will’s voice in the back of his mind. *"Survive for me."*

Lecter, turns out, hadn’t actually left. He’d stuck to the shadows, taking out a few of the guards himself.

Duncan entered the concrete hallway, shooting the fire extinguisher and taking down the group of guards. Hearing a sound behind him, he turned, gun aimed. He blinked when he registered who was there.

“Down,” Lecter said, throwing the knife in his hand. Duncan dropped to the side just in time, turning to see the dead guard fall. Lecter helped him to his feet and they moved down the tunnel.

Duncan was about to speak when two more came from a side tunnel at them.

"Why?" Duncan asked, dropping the dead body in his hands aside. Lecter dropped one as well and they continued down the cement corridor. "Why did you come after me?"

Lecter looked at him. "I need you alive to help save Will," he said matter of factly.

Duncan would have come up with some retort, but more guards kept coming.

Once the guards slowed and stopped, Lecter moved to Duncan. "Can you stand?" he asked, not ungently, but not particularly softly either.

Duncan grit his teeth, pushing away Lecter's hand and getting to his feet again. "Can you drive?" he retorted.

Lecter nodded. "Of course."

They moved out of the building and drove to another nearby building.

"Isn't this a bit close?" Lecter asked.

Duncan didn't waste time answering. He moved up the metal stairs set on the brick wall, moving to find the door locked. He hit the door a few times in a mock knock before a gun cocked behind them.

"Who the fuck are you?" came a woman's voice.

"I need your phone, Jazmin," Duncan grunted.

"Duncan?" the woman- Jazmin- said, sounding shocked. "Is that you?"

"Phone," Duncan managed, trying to reach into her pockets. He was going to go into shock soon, he had to hurry.

"Jesus christ, what the fuck happened to you?" Jazmin said.

"Phone!" Duncan demanded again.

"Here, here, take the phone," Jazmin handed him an old flip phone, looking worried.

Duncan dialed a number, his hands shaking.

"Speak," Vivian's voice answered.

"I'll make you a trade," Duncan said. "Me for him."

Silence over the line.

"You hear? You hear me?" Duncan growled.

"I heard you," came the soft reply.

"I'll call you back," Duncan said, before hanging up, pulling out the Sim card, and ripping it in half.

Lecter raised an eyebrow, catching his arm as he stumbled a bit.

"Can't trace it that way," Jazmin said, giving Lecter a confused once over. He clearly wasn't in Duncan's line of work, but if Duncan let him help him, he was trusted.

Then, Duncan collapsed.

"Whoa, I got you," Jazmin managed as she and Lecter caught him.

"Do you have medical supplies?" Hannibal asked calmly as they carried his look-alike inside. "I was a surgeon."

Jazmin looked up at him. "Nowhere near enough for this," she said.

"Can you get it?"

Jazmin nodded slowly. "I can make some calls."

Hannibal nodded. "Bring me what you have, and I'll do what I can. The sooner you can get more supplies, though, the better off he'll be."

Jazmin nodded again. "Got it." She helped Hannibal deposit Duncan on a long metal table before moving to get another Sim card.

Hannibal rolled up his sleeves. His suit was already ruined, but it was better to have them out of the way while he worked.

Duncan woke, not sure how long after. He lay on a large bed in Jazmin's loft. He saw her nearby, working at her work bench. He reached up, feeling the bandage over his eye, seeing the bandages covering him. Seeing a glass of water on a nearby table, he attempted to stand, before falling head first into the table and crashing to the floor.

"Shit," he heard Jazmin start, getting up and hurrying over to him. "Would you stop smirking and help me?" she snapped.

It was only then that Duncan saw Lecter closing the door, a tray of coffees and a paper bag in his hands. He was, indeed, smirking at Duncan. He set down breakfast and moved over to help Jazmin heave him back into bed.

"How long?" Duncan asked, his voice dry as his throat. Fuck, he'd really wanted that water.

Jazmin sighed, measuring a dose of something into a syringe. "You need rest, Duncan," she said softly. "Hey," she started as Duncan pulled at the bandages. "Stop, stop!" She sighed, exasperatedly before giving him the shot. "Here, lay down…"

"Have to… finish the call," Duncan half slurred. "Will…"

The last thing he heard was Lecter murmur something like, “Don’t know what he sees in-” but he was dragged under before he heard the rest.

Once he woke again, Jazmin seemed to accept that he'd rested as much as he was going to. "Alright, Duncan, what do you need?" she asked, looking around the workshop at the selection of guns.

"An army," Duncan managed.

Jazmin smiled slightly. "Alright…" she said, turning to a table. "You'll need… all of this."

After the gun setup was explained and loaded in the truck, Duncan looked at Lecter. "You don’t need to come," he grunted, figuring he'd give the man an out.

Lecter rolled his eyes. “You can barely stand on your own. I’ll stay out of your way, if that’s what you want, but I’m not leaving Will’s rescue to you alone.”

Duncan grunted again, climbing into the driver’s seat. Lecter gave Jazmin a nod and moved around to the other side of the truck, passing the covered bed to check it was closed.

“I always knew you’d come back,” Jazmin said, watching from the top of her steps. “Always hoped it would be for me, and not the guns.”

Duncan hesitated, hand on the door he’d been about to close. “Jazmin… thank you.”

“That ‘Will’ sure did a number on you, huh?” Jazmin teased, giving a wave before moving inside.

Duncan closed the door and started up the engine.

They drove to another warehouse and set up the gun.

Then, Duncan made the call.

"Speak," Vivian said. "What's the deal?"

"Me for him," Duncan said, "an even trade."

"I know. You already said that," Vivian said, "Where and when?"

"Central train station, nine a.m. tomorrow," Duncan said, checking his watch.

"Why the fuck are you doing this?" Vivian asked, sounding incredulous.

"I like him," Duncan said simply.

"You like him?" Vivian asked, Duncan could picture that slim eyebrow rising.

"Why are you doing this?" Duncan asked back.

"Please," Vivian scoffed, "this is our fucking job remember?" Duncan heard the computer cherp through the call before she continued, "You used to be good at it."

"Nine a.m. tomorrow," Duncan said, "You, me, and Will. That's it. No one else."

"Jesus! It has a name and you remember it," Vivian sounded shocked.

"And you have a face I won't forget," Duncan reminded her. "So you better not pull a fast one tomorrow. Unless you want to hide for the rest of your life, Vivian."

"I'm afraid it's a bit too late for that now," Vivian said softly as the trucks pulled into the warehouse. "And to think, you were hiding out just around the corner. Here we are."

Hannibal was surprised when the first person out of the trucks was a smartly dressed blonde. He crouched down slowly- to not draw attention to his hiding place on the catwalk- to get a better look at her. She walked towards Duncan, her outfit-matching phone still to her ear. "Happy to see me?" she asked as the soldiers began piling out.

"Not really," Duncan responded.

"I like the eyepatch, very fancy," she said.

"And you look extraordinary, as always," Duncan replied before they both closed their phones.

"Thought you quit smoking," the blonde said casually as she walked up.

"Yeah," Duncan said, taking a drag before continuing. "Figured it wouldn't kill me."

The woman hummed softly as the soldiers began to que up behind her.

"Was I on the phone too long?" Duncan asked, knowing full well he had been.

"Forty seven seconds," she said.

"Guess we do get rusty when we turn fifty."

"Yeah, it's sad," the woman said, though by her slight smile, Hannibal didn't think she really thought it was.

"I know they pay you well for this, Vivian," Duncan said softly, "but I'm still going to give you a chance to walk out of here alive. For old times' sake."

The woman- Vivian- seemed shaken by that, taking a moment to school her expression before biting out, "You've become sentimental."

"Me for him. An even trade," Duncan said again.

"You keep saying that, but you don't have anything to trade with. You're at a dead end. The road that you've chosen doesn't end in a rainbow."

"No…" Duncan agreed, "no rainbows."

"You grew soft, Duncan," Vivian said, beginning to back up. "Your bad."

The soldiers started moving up as Vivian turned to walk away. One soldier stood out, he was smaller than the others and had shocking red hair. He seemed very eager to put a bullet in Duncan.

Duncan sighed, setting his cigarette filter first on the hood of the truck. He straightened up, facing the lot of them as he raised his hands, engaging the glove controlled turrets. Hannibal covered his ears, watching intently as the lasers shone out from Duncan's fingertips. Before any of the soldiers could react, the turrets began firing, Duncan moving his hands in slow arcs to spread the hail of bullets across all of them. Less than thirty seconds later, they were all on the ground, some dead, some groaning weakly. Duncan lowered his hands and took off the gloves. He set them on the hood of the truck, picking up his cigarette in one hand and pulling out a handgun. He moved through the strewn bodies, quickly silencing the groans efficiently. He approached Vivian, who had crawled to lean back against a support beam, her red coat growing darker with her own blood.

"Duncan…" she managed quietly, "Duncan…" It was a plea, weak and soft, but she was scared and in pain. She wanted to live.

Hannibal moved up beside Duncan, having come down as Duncan cleared up the leftovers. He tilted his head as he observed Vivian look him over with confusion and surprise. She looked between the two, eyes widening.

"I gave you the chance," Duncan said, drawing the eyes of Vivian and Hannibal as he carefully crouched down to be at eye level with her. "Why didn't you take it?"

"A choice of death… or death…" Vivian managed softly. "Which would you choose?"

Duncan let out a sigh. "Where is he, Vivian?"

"Where the fuck do you think he is?" she growled back. When he just stared at her, she shook her head. "Mansion basement."

Duncan nodded, straightening up with a grunt and turning to Lecter. "Can you patch her up?" Hannibal raised an eyebrow at him. "Just long enough for her to get herself to a hospital."

Lecter huffed and nodded. "Then we go after Will."

"Then we go after Will," Duncan agreed.

Lecter moved over to the truck, grabbing a first aid kit and getting to work. Once she was patched up, Vivian stumbled to one of the cars and drove away.

Lecter looked at Duncan. "The man in those photos… he'll be with Will be at this mansion?"

Duncan nodded. "Blut, owner of Damocles… it's his house."

Lecter nodded, a glint in his eyes told Duncan all he needed to know. If Duncan didn't kill him, Hannibal would.

Chapter 5

The two walked towards the mansion. They were in no hurry, they knew Blut was low on men now. As they walked, they heard several shots from inside, but nothing towards them. As they moved inside, soldiers began to hurry past them, murmuring things like, "Excuse us," and, "He's upstairs." Several even moved to vacate the side of the stairs they were moving up.

"Hello," the secretary said cheerfully. "Is Mr. Blut expecting you?"

Duncan moved past her desk, not saying anything, focused on his target.

“I expect he is,” Hannibal said softly, following Duncan’s lead in not slowing, and staying at his side.

"I'll fetch you a cup of coffee, sirs," she said, unfazed.

"Bring me the bitch!" They heard Blut growl into the phone. "What? What do you mean you won’t- hello? Hello?!"

Duncan noticed an axe in a display case. He moved over, picking it up and testing the weight of it.

Blut saw their reflections in the glass, the phone slipping out of his hand as he stared in shock at the **two** Kaisers. He turned, his shaking hand grabbing his sword from the desk, raising it in one hand and his Walther in the other, trying to look fierce.

Duncan fought back a sneer at the weak display before swinging the axe.

Blut's head ended up out in the drive. Duncan briefly wondered if it was a personal best when it came to beheading, but dropped the thought, more worried about finding Will.

"Done already, sirs?" the secretary asked as she came up with a small tray.

"Where was he keeping… his guest?" Duncan asked carefully.

The secretary sighed, nodding, "He's downstairs on the right side," she said softly, "do help him, won't you? He doesn't deserve what they had planned…"

Duncan nodded slightly, "Thank you… miss-

"Doris." She said with a small nod, "Now, if you'll excuse me sirs, I need to find the mop."

The two slowly entered the basement, ready to fight off anyone foolish enough to stick around.

The basement was still lavishly furnished, though it seemed the decor hadn't been updated since the sixties. Will was laying on a sleeper sofa, the rubber tubing still wrapped around his arm. His breathing was slightly heavy and he was covered in a cold sweat, his eyelids fluttering occasionally as if trying to wake. Near the foot of the couch lay the girl Duncan had seen at the hotel, her eyes were wide and glassy, dark red bruises encircled her neck.

Lecter checked the girl, shaking his head. "Gone."

“Good,” Duncan said, crouching down beside Will and removing the rubber tubing.

Lecter strode forward quickly, checking Will over, feeling his pulse and checking under an eyelid. "Badly drugged," he said softly. "Probably has been the whole time…"

Duncan nodded. “He’s strong… it would have taken a lot to keep him under control.”

Lecter nodded, though he didn't seem that surprised by that. He moved to pick up Will but Duncan beat him to it, grunting slightly with the effort, but not about to tap out.

Will moaned softly. "D-Dun…" he mumbled weakly.

"I've got ya, Will," Duncan murmured.

They moved out of the mansion and into the car, driving back to their cabins on the lake.

By the time they returned to the cabin, Will was burning with fever, moaning weakly as his body shook in Duncan’s arms.

"His symptoms are getting worse…" Hannibal said, feeling his forehead and checking his pulse.

"Probably had to keep upping the dose, he's a fighter." Duncan said softly, and maybe a little proudly.

Hannibal nodded slightly as he opened the cabin door for Duncan and moved to gather what might be needed.

The next few hours, Duncan stayed beside Will, a cool damp cloth in hand to wipe away the sweat, murmuring soothingly when Will’s shaking worsened or simply stroking his hair gently, they would be in for a rough time…

Chapter 6

The next few days, Will was barely conscious, often waking up to cry or scream, thrashing and panicked. His eyes never seemed to recognize Duncan or Lecter when he was awake, but Duncan knew it was the withdrawals.

They had an Iv for him, helping to keep him hydrated and past the withdrawals quickly, but mostly, it was a waiting game… one mostly spent in silence, though they did talk occasionally, breaking up the monotonous air.

"How did you know Will was out here anyways?" Duncan asked, looking at Lecter after the latest bout of screaming from Will. "He didn't tell anyone where he went."

Lecter sighed softly. "An elementary school called Quantico to check Will Graham's credentials. Jack Crawford informed me, so I came."

Duncan sighed and shook his head. “I talked him into that,” he said softly. “Giving demonstrations for the kids…”

Lecter nodded slightly, "I see… I wondered why an elementary school of all places called about him."

Duncan sighed, wiping the sweat from Will’s forehead gently, "He just wanted to be left alone… I should have realized that he could lose that with a call…"

Lecter frowned, "He left without saying a word… because-"

"Because he was sick of all the shit you were all putting him through? Yeah." Duncan replied shortly. "I intend to help him maintain that peace… now more than ever."

Lecter's chin came up slightly at the veiled threat, but then, Will whimpered softly and opened eyes that were clearer than they had been in days.

Will didn't know where he was as he swam in and out of awareness. Whenever he managed to reach almost full awareness though, he would feel a needle in his arm and he would be lost again. He had no idea how long he was there, or who this blue haired girl he would see when the needle came was, but one day… day? Night? He wasn't sure… maybe it wasn't either… He heard screams, fighting, then he felt a warm coat draped over him, felt himself being lifted and carried away. He tried to focus on who was carrying him, but his mind refused, and he fell asleep again.

The next days were agony, he could count every minute, every second, as the drugs were purged from his system. He remembered screaming and crying, he remembered two sets of arms holding him, one wrapped in black, the other in rich suits. When he finally managed to fully wake, he saw two men standing over him.

He blinked a few times, making sure he wasn't seeing double. "Duncan…? H-Hannibal?" he managed weakly.

“I told you he would wake,” Hannibal said, a smug smile pulling at his lips.

“Hm,” Duncan said, moving forward to sit on the bed, reaching to brush back some of Will’s sweat damp curls.

Hannibal approached from the other side with a glass of water.

Will sighed softly, leaning into Duncan’s touch before struggling to sit up and drink. Duncan helped him sit up and Hannibal held the cup steady, not letting the water pour too quickly nor too slowly.

Will made a soft frustrated noise, feeling like he was dying of thirst, but knowing Hannibal wouldn't speed up.

"Patience, Will," Hannibal chided. "I doubt they were keeping care of you. You need to take it slowly."

Will scoffed softly but obeyed. They'd taken care of him alright, kept him drugged and weak… Had he eaten at all while-?

His thoughts were interrupted by Duncan stroking his hair again.

Once he’d finished the water, they’d helped him settle back on the bed, and he drifted to sleep again. Some time later, he heard the two of them talking quietly; hushed yet heated words.

“You need to tell him,” Duncan said. “He thinks she’s-”

“Not yet,” Hannibal said back. “He’s not ready. He’s still ill.”

“Has he ever not been sick around you?” Duncan asked sharply. “Have you ever actually cared when he was?”

Hannibal was quiet for a time, finally he said, “It sounds like you know him very well.”

Duncan scoffed at the evasion. "He needed an ear to listen, I didn't mind."

Hannibal made a soft noise before he turned away. "Once he's better," was all he said. Then the click of his shoes moving away.

Will could hear Duncan’s growl of frustration before the front door opened and closed. Duncan respected Will’s place enough to step outside when he needed a smoke.

Will drifted back to sleep, waking when someone sat on the bed, making it dip. Duncan’s hand was on his forehead, checking his temperature. Will hummed softly, leaning into the hand but not finding his voice.

Duncan turned to the bedside table, hissing softly, and suddenly Will saw the bandages. It was a wonder he hadn't seen them before, there were so many.

"Wh-what-" Will started, his throat dry, he coughed weakly before trying again, "What- h-happened?"

"My old boss was a stingy bastard," Duncan said. "Didn't want to pay my retirement. There's a clause in our contracts that said if I died before my fiftieth with no beneficiary, the money would go back to the company. Two problems with that… I had no intention of dying… and I named someone as a beneficiary. That's why they set up the hits."

Will looked up at him. "Beneficiary?"

"You, Will," Duncan said softly.

Will's eyes widened. "H-hold on…" he said, "you named me as…"

"It's why they took you," Duncan said.

Will stared at Duncan for a moment, "Duncan… You're owed-"

"Over eight million."

"And you… put me as-"

"Yes."

Will couldn't get his brain around that. "But why?!" Was all he managed. He had grown up poor, he had lived poor, content with what his job had paid so he could feed his dogs and maybe himself, but… that much money… he couldn't even imagine.

"You're the only one in my life I could think to give it to," Duncan said. "I don't have family. If something happened to me, the only thing I'd want taken care of is you." He shook his head. "And that put the target on your back."

Will sighed softly, reaching to take Duncan's hand, careful of the bandages there. "Duncan…"

Duncan looked down at their hands together and ran his thumb over Will's knuckles. "I'm sorry… that you got mixed up in all this… So sorry, Will…"

"If I had to do it all again? I would…" He squeezed Duncan's hand weakly. "I love you…"

"Will…"

Will looked up at him, his eyes soft, no anger or accusations, just love.

Duncan reached up with his free hand, cradling Will's face. "Too damn good for me," he murmured, running his thumb over Will's cheek.

Will hummed softly, smiling up at him. "Right back at ya," he said softly.

Duncan shook his head, but he didn't argue further. Instead, he closed the distance, gently kissing Will's forehead. "I love you, too, Will," he murmured.

Will felt a warm smile spread across his face. He took Duncan's hand and squeezed before he sighed and relaxed back for some more rest.

The withdrawals continued that night, Will lay shaking in the bed, sweating as his muscles seized painfully, the nightmares had woken him, but the pain refused to let him rest, he kept his jaw clenched, he wouldn't make a sound, he was already such a burden right now, he couldn't take what sleep the others were managing to get…

Another tremor rushed through him followed by a sea of pain, a whimper forced its way out from behind his teeth as his breathing picked up. Movement in the dark startled him, but the shadow resolved itself into Duncan. He sat on the edge of the bed, using a damp cloth to clean the sweat off Will's face.

Will sighed weakly. "Thanks…" he managed, the movement however set his teeth chattering.

"I'm sorry, Will," Duncan said softly, pulling the blanket up and tucking it around him. "I'm so sorry…"

Will shook his head slightly but couldn't find the words to say how he felt.

Duncan shook his head, picking up the water from the nightstand. "Here." He helped Will sit up a bit and helped him drink. Unlike Hannibal, Duncan let Will set the pace, letting him drink as much as he wanted as quickly as he liked.

Will sighed softly as the empty glass pulled away, still shivering, but feeling a bit better with Duncan there. Duncan set the glass aside, helped Will lie back down, and fixed the blankets again.

"S-stay…" Will managed as Duncan started to stand, "Stay with me…?"

Duncan nodded, laying down beside him. Will sighed, curling close to Duncan's warmth, whimpering weakly. Duncan turned onto his side, wrapping an arm around Will and pulling him closer.

Will sighed softly, trying to relax as he shook through his withdrawals.

Will didn't know when he managed to fall asleep, but he woke with a painful jolt at the clearing of a throat. He whimpered at the sudden painful tensing of his muscles, managing to look up and see Hannibal standing above him and Duncan on the bed.

Duncan looked up, sighing and pulling back from Will to sit up. Will tried to hold Duncan there, but found he didn't have the strength. Duncan gently patted Will's hand, letting him know he wasn't leaving. Will sighed softly, relaxing a bit and looking up at Hannibal.

Duncan settled back against the headboard, meeting Lecter's stare without moving.

Finally, Hannibal sighed and turned his focus on Will. “How are you feeling?” he asked.

Will sighed. "Like Frankenstein's monster… dead but still moving…"

Hannibal nodded. “You should be past the worst of the withdrawals,” he said, taking a seat on a chair situated at the foot of the bed, crossing his leg the way he always had in his office. Seeing the old habit brought into clearity that Hannibal was there. Really, really there.

Will nodded, watching the doctor warily, before noticing a look he gave Duncan. *Was that… jealousy?*

“You… don’t seem pleased to see me,” Hannibal observed when the silence stretched on for what he deemed to be too long.

Will looked at him. "Correct me if I'm misremembering, but you had me thrown in prison after attempting to fry my brain and shoving an ear down my throat."

Hannibal’s eyes darted to Duncan, as if to gauge his reaction, or lack thereof. “That… was part of what happened,” he allowed. “Though not everything.”

Will raised an eyebrow, "Really? What else is there? Oh, you mean scheming with Able Gideon to *kill* Alana while I was standing *right there* having a seizure? Or that you blamed your killings on me? How about breaking into my house and planting evidence? Or maybe killing Georgia Madchen? Or Katz?" Will was shaking now, his breathing getting quicker. He felt like he might throw up, but he couldn't stop, his anger had built and built and now he had a chance to say it. "You let the encephalitis take my mind when you could have stopped it. You l-let Jack shoot me. You kept me… sick when y-you… I *trusted* you!" The last came out rather choked off, Will’s body shuddering under a hacking cough.

Duncan gently rubbed Will’s back helping him sit forward so he didn’t choke on anything, and putting a bucket in his lap in case he needed it. Hannibal twitched slightly, as if he wanted to move forward and help, but he stayed seated, having the decency to look at least slightly uncomfortable.

"You know…" Will said weakly, once he’d caught his breath, "usually, when you like someone, you send them flowers or chocolate, or just tell them… you don't frame them for serial murder…"

"Booze is also a good start," Duncan added helpfully. Hannibal shot him a withering look, but Duncan seemed unphased.

"I… was unaware of the extent of my feelings toward you," Hannibal said stiffly, not liking to have to admit this in front of others.

Will sighed. "You… the chess master, didn't realize how…" He shook his head slightly.

"It is often more difficult to see the truth of one's own self than in others," Hannibal said.

"Glad that got sorted out…" Will deadpanned.

"Will," Hannibal said, exasperatedly, "I am trying to tell you-"

"That you're sorry for making me think I was a killer?" Will asked. "For helping Jack lock me up for *months* ?"

Hannibal pressed his lips together, suppressing his retort. He wet his lips, giving himself time to consider his words.

Surprisingly, Duncan spoke up first. “Give him a chance to explain,” he said softly, leaning closer to Will. “You know you’re always gonna wonder why he did it all. Why torture yourself when you can have the answers?”

Will looked at Duncan for a moment before nodding, "Alright…" he looked at Hannibal. "Take your time… get your head together, but I don't want lies or excuses."

Hannibal nodded, looking down at his hands, clasped together in his lap. “In the beginning of our relations, I thought you would just be another mind I could manipulate, use for my own means, but as I got to know you, I found you fascinating. The way you could empathize with anyone… I thought, maybe you might be the only one to truly see me. Then, with… Garret Jacob Hobbs, I wanted to see what would happen. When you said that you enjoyed killing him, I wanted to see your becoming, to see you bloom into what you were truly meant to be. When you became ill… I let my curiosity rule my judgment. That was a mistake. I never should have put your mind, *you* , at risk. For that, I am sorry. While you were healing, Jack was closing in. I thought I had no choice but to pin the blame on someone else, anyone else. I should have put it on Chilton. Perhaps it sounds like an excuse, but it is all the truth. I let my emotions control several of my actions and have caused you grief, and for that I do apologize...”

"What about Alana?" Will asked, "was she part of your emotional reaction?"

"Alana was a means of getting an alibi," Hannibal said. "A pleasant distraction."

Will was silent for a long moment before saying softly. "Can you… give me some time? I… need to think…"

“Of course,” Hannibal said, standing smoothly.

“Wait,” Duncan said. “Tell him.”

Hannibal froze, glaring at Duncan.

“He needs to know,” Duncan insisted. “And if you don’t, I will.”

Will looked confused. "Tell me what?"

Hannibal sighed, shaking his head and holding up his hands. “Fine. Fine…” He lowered his hands again and met Will’s gaze. “Abigail is alive. She’s here. I was going to surprise you when you were acquitted of the charges, but you never came back.”

Will was still for a long moment before taking a deep breath and nodded. Then he turned away from Hannibal, laying down beside Duncan again. He heard Hannibal's hard soled shoes leave the room, the soft click of the door closing behind him.

Duncan's arms wrapped around him carefully. "Your gears are spinning so hard, I can hear them," he murmured, pressing a kiss to Will's temple.

"I…" Will said softly, sighing, "I want to be mad… I want to be furious at him. I want to… kill him… but… after everything he just said I… I can understand why… and I can't be mad." He sighed, burying his face in Duncan's chest. "My own mind turned against me…"

Duncan's fingers trailed through Will's curls. "You don't have to make a decision now."

Will nodded slightly. "I guess… but my mind doesn't want to stop…"

Duncan hummed softly, stroking Will's curls. "How did you used to get it to stop?"

Will chuckled weakly. "Who says I did?"

Duncan nodded knowingly, settling into the bed before surprising Will by humming an old lullaby. It wasn't one Will recognized, but it was something to focus on. Will felt himself relaxing. He leaned into Duncan's chest, feeling the hummed song through his chest and closed his eyes.

"Here, sweetie," the blue haired girl said, pushing the needle in again.

"This is him?" A strange man with a large birthmark on his face sneered over him. "This is the Black Kaiser's bitch?"

"He wants to trade," a woman's voice now, "him for him."

"The bitch?" the man from before asked.

"Is he even worth it?" the woman asked.

"Not when I'm done with him," the man growled, "because they'll both be FUCKING DEAD!"

A throat under his hands, gasping for breath as he tightened his grip, her face matching her blue hair...

Will's eyes snapped open with a strangled cry, looking around the room quickly to make sure he wasn't still there on that musty smelling couch with the needle in his arm.

"Easy…" Duncan murmured, hand stroking soothingly down his back, the other gently turning his face to meet his gaze. "Easy, Will…."

It took Will a few minutes before he could calm his mind enough to speak. "D-Duncan… I…"

“It’s alright, Will,” Duncan murmured. “You’re here, with me… you’re safe.”

"I… killed that girl… didn't I...?" Will whispered, eyes wide.

Duncan shrugged slightly. “She was dead when we found you… from the bruising on her neck, looked like someone strangled her with their bare hands. Could have been you.” He didn’t seem bothered by that prospect.

Will shivered slightly. "I… I remember her neck in my hands… but… why did I-"

“I imagine she was the one keeping you drugged,” Duncan said. “She had enough shit in her system when I saw her before to know how to keep you under.”

Will nodded slightly looking at his hands. *Why did I...? If I was drugged so long... what made me-*

Duncan’s fingers in his hair drew him back to the present again, his lips against his forehead. “I don’t regret her death,” he said softly. “Nor should you.”

Will nodded slightly. "I don't… but I wonder what happened that made me…" He shook his head slightly. "It doesn't matter… I'm not going to dwell on the past."

Duncan pressed another kiss to his forehead. Will smiled softly, leaning into Duncan’s chest with a sigh.

"There's something else on your mind," Duncan murmured softly.

Will nodded slightly. "Hannibal’s here," he said softly.

“He is,” Duncan agreed. He took a deep breath before adding, “He saved my eye… and probably my life.”

Will nodded. He was glad Duncan was alright… but… "He came for me…" he said softly. "He framed me. He alienated me from anyone I was close to. He doesn't want me to have anything in my life… that's not… him." Will sighed softly, his hand gripping Duncan’s sweater tightly as if afraid he would disappear.

Duncan held him tightly. “Well, he’s not getting rid of me,” he promised. “He had the chance, whether he knew it or not. Now that chance is gone. You’re stuck with me, Will.”

"He's pretty persistent," Will murmured, pressing into Duncan’s chest again.

“So am I,” Duncan murmured into Will’s curls.

Will hummed softly, his hand still tightly gripping Duncan’s shirt.

"Do you still love him?" Duncan asked softly.

Will pulled back enough to look up at him, "What?"

"Nobody can cause this much pain if love wasn't there at some point," Duncan said. "I know he's hurt you, but I know that love isn't something one can control."

Will was still for a long moment, thinking before softly saying, "Yes… I shouldn't, but… I do…"

Duncan was silent for a moment before murmuring, "Then why not be with him?"

Will looked up at Duncan in shock. "What?"

"You love him, he loves you, so why not?" Duncan said.

Will stared. "Are… you dumping me?" he asked softly, feeling like his heart was about to break.

"No," Duncan said quickly, "but I won't keep you from something you want." He frowned slightly, speaking slowly, as if unsure why he had to state the obvious, "You can be with more than one person, you know."

Will stared at him, his mouth opening and closing like a fish as he tried to absorb what Duncan was saying.

"There's this thing called 'polyamory'," Duncan said. "It can work, if everyone involved wants it to."

Will's eyes widened even further. "You would-"

There was confusion in the slight creasing at the corners of Duncan's eyes. "Do… you think I'm selfish?" he finally asked. "Do you think I'd ever deny you something that would make you happy? I won't let him hurt you," he added, "if that's what you're worried about."

Will sighed softly, pressing close to Duncan again. "You're so good," he murmured. "I don't deserve it."

Duncan wrapped his arms around Will again, letting out a soft chuckle. "You deserve much better than me," he said softly.

Will sighed, relaxing in Duncan's hold. "Thank you for saving me…"

He could almost hear the smirk in Duncan's voice. "Which time?" he asked, teasingly.

Will shoved at his shoulder slightly, though there was no strength behind it. "Jerk…"

"I'd do it again," Duncan said seriously. "In a heartbeat. You know that, don't you?"

"Yeah… I know…" Will said, smiling slightly and kissing Duncan. "I know…"

The next morning, Abigail came to see Will, bringing Rusty and Winston with her. Winston was careful, standing beside the bed and nosing at Will's hand gently. Rusty on the other hand, jumped up on the bed, wiggling and whining like the hyper puppy he was. Duncan made a disapproving sound, which Rusty whined at but settled down in Will's lap.

Will was grateful the dogs were there. This reunion was going to be hard enough, he was going to need all the comforting grounding he could get.

Abigail stood at the foot of the bed, her arm across her stomach and clinging to the other which hung at her side. Her hair was tucked behind her remaining ear, though it hung down and covered the missing one, and she was wearing one of her silk scarves to hide the scarring on her neck.

Will smiled weakly at her. "I'm sorry… that I scared you before…" he said softly.

Abigail let out a sound that was somewhere between a laugh and a sob. "What? At the cabin?" She shook her head. "God, I… I almost forgot about that." She shook her head at Will's concerned expression. "Because so much has happened," she clarified. "Besides, I was… I was kinda right. You *were* sick, just not the way I thought."

"How are you, Abigail?"

She looked around the cabin, her hand tightening on her arm slightly. "I'm… I'm alright." She nodded, as if trying to convince herself. "I am," she said, finally looking at Will again. "We're all together again."

Will smiled slightly, scratching at Rusty's ears. "Thank you for taking care of these two as well."

Abigail smiled slightly. "They were both good boys while you were gone."

Will smiled, giving both of them a good scratch before sighing, his energy levels still too low to do much. Rusty snuffled, trying to wiggle closer while Winston accepted his scratches and watched Will worriedly.

Will spent another day resting, though he whined to Duncan about feeling like a kitten with how weak he was.

"It just means I get to pamper you." Duncan said, rather smugly, chuckling when Will slapped his arm lightly.

"I know you'll keep me safe…" Will said softly, "I've just…"

"Preservation instincts…" Duncan said knowingly, "I understand…"

Will sighed, "I know… and with you around I… feel like I don't need my walls like I always did before… and… I'm alright with that." He smiled weakly at Duncan, "I know I'm safe with you…"

Duncan smiled back, leaning in and kissing Will’s forehead, "Get some more rest, alright? You'll feel better soon."

Will nodded, "Alright…" he pushed Duncan down on the bed and curled up on his chest.

Duncan chuckled, stroking Will’s curls soothingly.

Will smiled, loving the warm comfort he had with Duncan, then he slowly fell asleep.

The nightmare was bad; Will couldn’t even make sense of what was happening, just jumbled voices and colors, noises, but whatever it was, he woke with a harsh scream to two concerned, near identical, faces.

"You're alright," Duncan was saying softly, "You're OK, it’s just a dream…"

Will sat up slowly, his mind piecing together the garbled pieces of the dream.

"Careful, Will," Duncan said, moving to help him.

"I need to see your papers," Will said softly, slight memories from his drugged up state filtering back.

"Papers?" Duncan asked, shaking his head to show his utter confusion.

"You're contract…" Will said, "your original Damocles contract."

Duncan hesitated, but nodded. It took him a few minutes to get them from his cabin, but he returned, handing the folder to Will.

Will looked through the papers, trying to ignore his pounding head. "There," Will said, holding it out to the other two, "clause four, section two…"

Duncan put on his glasses and read over the section, looking up at Will in surprise. “How did you-”

Hannibal took the paper. "Why would he sign such a document?" he asked, reading over the clause. "If anything, it only gives incentive to kill him."

"He thought he was safe behind his own private army," Duncan said. "He was wrong."

Will smiled weakly. "Well, if he'd actually listened when people told him to leave you alone, he wouldn't have been."

Duncan frowned, taking his glasses off again. “I don’t want it.”

Will looked at him. "I thought you didn't want to retire, this is your chance."

Duncan shook his head. “I didn’t. I’m good at what I do, but I don’t want to run things.”

Will touched his hand gently. "You won't be alone." He smiled at him. "I'll help."

Lecter’s mouth tightened ever so slightly, but he didn’t comment.

Duncan shrugged, clearly still uncomfortable with the idea. “Well, if all else fails, we can do what Blut was going to do anyways and sell the company.”

Will nodded. "Yeah, I think we can do it though."

Chapter 7

The three of them walked towards the mansion. Will wondered what they must look like, a skinny, pale brunet flanked by two Black Kaisers? He shook off the thought and continued inside.

Upstairs in Blut's old office were a group of people in sunglasses and sharp suits, arguing over how to distribute the company among them. They all fell silent as the three entered the room.

"Who are you?" the woman demanded. She seemed to be in charge of the group, in a smart suit and straight black hair.

Will smiled at them pleasantly, using his Hannibal impression again. "We're the owners of Damocles. And I would like to thank you for cleaning up the bodies, but you can go now."

The group all frowned as the woman scoffed. "Mr. Blut is dead," she said, rather acidly, "and he had no heir, so the company has no owner. We have decided that-"

"Well, undecide it," Will said, holding out a paper.

"What's this?" The woman asked tartly, not happy about being cut off like that.

"It's the contract, signed by this man," Will indicated Duncan, "the Black Kaiser," he gave them a moment for that to sink in, "and the previous owner, Mr. Blut. Clause four, section two, states that if Blut were to lose his life at the undersigned's hand, the company would fall to him. Seeing as the Kaiser here was so kind as to remove Blut's head from his shoulders, I'd say that's about it." Will smiled at them again. "You can go now," he repeated.

The woman read the paper before looking at Will, her eyes narrowing behind her sunglasses as if trying to come up with a counter. When none came to her, she handed the paper back and turned, marching out briskly.

“That was easier than expected,” Duncan said, watching them go from one of the windows.

Will sighed, sitting down and running a hand over his face, obviously rattled by talking to a group like that. "Believe it or not, Duncan, you have a reputation. I doubt they’d try anything if you're involved…"

Duncan shook his head, but didn’t comment. He looked back into the room, watching Hannibal wander around slowly, appreciating the art and weaponry in the room.

"Oh, welcome back, sir," came a soft voice from the door. The elderly secretary entered, carrying a tray. "Would anyone like some coffee?"

Duncan smiled. “Thank you, Doris.”

The woman set down the tray on the table. "Is there anything else I can help with right now, sir?"

“Nothing phases you, huh?” Duncan asked with a chuckle.

“When you’ve worked for this place as long as I have, little will,” she said with a wink.

“I think that’ll be all for now,” Duncan said. “We know where to find you if we need anything.”

"Very good," Doris said, nodding. She smiled at them all before moving out to her desk.

Will moved over to Hannibal, looking at the weapon’s display he was looking at. “You don’t like this plan much, do you?” he asked softly.

Hannibal rolled his eyes. “I’m trying to determine if I pushed you so far that you’ve lost your mind entirely,” he admitted. “The Will I met would never have considered taking over an assassination business.”

“The Will you met died many times over, Hannibal,” Will retorted. "You saw to that much."

Hannibal’s eyes fell, and he looked ashamed. Whether that was just his mask, or if he truly felt it, it was hard for Will to tell anymore. “You love him,” he observed, glancing toward Duncan, “and he loves you.”

Will looked at Duncan. "Yes…" he said softly, feeling a smile tug at his mouth before looking back at Hannibal, "and?"

“I’m trying to convince myself that our tea cup will never regather itself,” Hannibal said. “I’m trying to find my next move on a chessboard that no longer interests me because I can never maneuver my way back into your good graces.” He shook his head, straightening again. “I’m trying to decide what to do with my life, Will.”

Will looked at the weapons again. "Have you tried?"

Hannibal let out a slow sigh. “There has been little time to do anything,” he admitted. “Between tracking you down, finding you missing…”

Will shrugged slightly. "I haven't noticed you trying, so have you tried to ‘maneuver your way back into my good graces’?" He touched the glass of the case gently. "Kintsugi… has worked in the past…" He looked up at Hannibal again and smiled ever so slightly. "Guess the ball’s in your court."

Hannibal looked at him, disbelief plain. “You’re encouraging me to pull you away from a relationship you are clearly happy in?”

Will shook his head slightly. "No, I don't want you to pull me away, but you can come closer…"

Hannibal studied his face for a long time. “I am… not the best at sharing, Will.”

“Well, that’s your options,” Will said bluntly. “You can learn to live with being one part of my life, or you can go back to living it without me.”

Hannibal’s mouth opened, but he didn’t speak, seeming shocked.

Will turned and moved back to the table where Duncan now sat.

Duncan pushed a cup of coffee toward Will. “You told him?”

Will sighed. “Ya. Not sure if he’ll go for polyamory, but I gave him an ultimatum.” He looked at Duncan. “I’m not leaving you. If he can’t deal with that, it’s not my problem anymore.”

Duncan brushed back some of Will’s curls, his thumb brushing away a tear he hadn’t realized he’d shed. “I know how much he means to you. I hope he chooses your happiness. I always will.”

Will smiled. "I know… thank you, Duncan."

Duncan leaned forward, his arm going around Will’s waist to pull him gently into his lap, nuzzling his nose into Will’s neck. Will hummed happily, relaxing in Duncan’s hold.

"Oh!" Will said suddenly, sitting up slightly, "I completely forgot!"

Duncan looked up at him, eyebrows raised curiously. Will turned, pulling Duncan into a deep, searing kiss, taking advantage of the man's surprise to slip his tongue in and explore. Duncan’s eyes slipped closed, a small moan escaped him, swallowed up by Will’s mouth.

Will pulled back, smiling breathlessly. "Happy late birthday, Duncan," he said softly.

Duncan rolled his eyes, shaking his head. “You tease,” he murmured.

Will snuggled down again, seeing Hannibal's tight lipped expression. Hannibal may have been good at hiding his emotions before, but after spending so much time with Duncan, king of the microexpression, Hannibal wasn't so hard to read.

"I'm sorry, sir," Doris said, coming into the room again. "Most of the staff fled when you first arrived before. Would you like me to try and call them back to work?"

Will looked at her. "We'll figure that out soon. I think we can handle it for the moment."

“Gather their contact information,” Duncan suggested. “We might not need them as guards, but we’ll be needing agents to take jobs.”

Doris smiled. "Very good, sir."

Will watched the internal struggle on Duncan’s face as Doris turned to go. Coming to a decision, Duncan called out, “Call Vivian. Set up a meeting.” As almost an afterthought, he added a genuine, “please.”

Doris glanced back and nodded. “I’ll get right on that, sir.”

Will looked at Duncan. "I've heard that name… wasn't she the one who sent you to Belarus?"

Duncan nodded.

“She was also the one at the warehouse,” Hannibal recalled, moving closer. Duncan nodded again. “The one who tried to kill you. The one you very nearly killed in return.”

“She was given little choice,” Duncan said. “She’s good at following orders.”

Will nodded slowly. "Can she be trusted?"

“So long as we pay her properly,” Duncan nodded. “And we can always kill her if she tries anything.”

Will nodded slightly. "Alright. I trust you."

A few minutes later, the blonde entered the room, looking just as fancy as usual, almost like she hadn't been shot before. "Duncan," she said softly.

Will stiffened slightly, remembering that voice from his drugged haze.

Duncan’s hand gently squeezed Will’s shoulder, grounding and reassuring him. “Vivian. Take a seat.” His voice was neutral, despite the tension in the room.

Hannibal came over, sitting down a chair away, also facing Vivian.

Vivian sat smoothly, placing her, again, outfit matching phone, on the table and drumming on it gently with her manicured nails. "What is it you want?" she asked cooly.

“We,” Duncan said, glancing to Hannibal and Will before looking at her again, “want to know whether we should be expecting your two weeks' notice, or whether you’re ready to get back to work.”

Vivian raised a slim eyebrow. "You… still want to employ me?"

Duncan shrugged. "That's up to you. There's going to be some changes around here, but the position is still yours, if you still want it."

Vivian pursed her lips thoughtfully for a moment. "What kind of changes?"

"Well, for one," Duncan said, "we're going to change the rules about forced retirement."

"For another," Hannibal said, speaking up for the first time in his clipped tone, "we'll be editing the clause in regards to retirement funds being returned to the company. Perhaps the agents could choose a charity to donate some of it to instead. Less monetary reasons for future heads of company to turn on their own assets."

Duncan nodded his agreement. "The company will be run by a committee, not a single person. Too much temptation for one person to hold all that power."

"Checks and balances," Will agreed softly.

Vivian nodded slowly. "Alright, when do I start?"

"As soon as your bullet wound heals."

Vivian nodded and stood. "Give me a few weeks, then. I'll call you." She turned and left.

Will relaxed slightly after she was gone, sighing. "Alright…" he said softly, reaching for his coffee, "did they at least keep decent records in this place?"

Duncan chuckled softly. "Doris would allow nothing less. Blut never really did the records, so they should be good."

As if speaking of her had summoned her, Doris entered the room, straightening the chair Vivian had left askew. “Is there anything I can do for you, sirs?” she asked.

Will smiled; he liked her. "Can you show me where the records are?" he asked, standing.

“Ah, yes. Of course, sir.” She gave a little nod to Duncan and then to Hannibal before leading Will out of the room.

“She can be trusted?” Hannibal asked Duncan, once the old woman was out of ear shot.

“Undoubtedly,” Duncan said. “Blut may have been in charge, but it’s Doris that kept things really running.” Hannibal frowned, disbelief obvious. Duncan sighed, shaking his head. “Something you’re going to have to learn about this kind of work,” he said, “is that almost no one is ‘trustworthy’. Some of them, though, if you pay them properly and treat them right, will be loyal to that.”

Hannibal still looked like he’d swallowed a lemon, but he nodded and didn’t ask any more questions.

Will returned an hour or so later, grinning. "Ok, Doris is amazing. How she kept all those records straight I'll never know, but," he shook his head, "it’s all organized and cared for, this might be an easier time then I thought."

Duncan smiled. “Found what you were looking for?”

Will held up a cardboard box. "Found more 'unexplained deaths' around their retirement… but I also found what agents I think, given their records, we could trust, though I figure you'd like to look through them first." He brought it over and set it on the table, opening it. "You know at least some of the other agents… right?"

“Mostly by reputation,” Duncan said, but he seemed to like the idea, pulling folders out of the box and getting started right away.

Will set the box down beside the desk for easy access. Duncan was looking through them, sorting them as he went, before he froze. "Not him," he said, dropping the file aside, as far from the others as he could reach without throwing it, probably just so it wouldn't get confused with the piles he'd already started making.

Will picked it up and looked. "Alright… He seemed to have a good record, so I-"

"I'm not working with him again," Duncan said coldly.

Will's eyes widened. "It's him?"

Duncan hummed slightly, turning his focus to the other files again.

"I'm sorry…" Will said softly, "It didn't say he had been in Israel…"

"Probably redacted it…" Duncan said bitterly, "They don't… didn't… want agents with bad records…" He looked up, putting a hand on Will's arm. "Not your fault. You couldn't have known."

Will sighed, nodding slightly. "Alright…" He turned and put the folder on top of the nearby shredder; looking up, he saw Hannibal's curious expression.

Will shook his head slightly, as if to say, *"not now."*

Hannibal nodded once. *"Fine, but I won't forget."*

And just like that, it was as if no time had passed between them; they still knew each other so well, almost too well.

Will and Duncan continued going through the files, picking out ones that would be a good fit, filing them for Vivian to make contact when she started.

After that, they had a light lunch where Will quietly explained to Hannibal about the rejected file. When they went back to the office later, Will only partly registered that the man's file was gone, he thought perhaps Doris had cleaned up.

When Hannibal disappeared the next morning and arrived a few days later, proceeding to make a large meal for them, Will knew.

Duncan shrugged slightly when Will explained to him, "I honestly might have gone after him myself at some point if I ever reached that point. As for the meal, he might as well do at least *something* with his existence that's worth something."

A few days later, Will was in the library of the mansion, looking through the books when he heard someone come in. He looked up, seeing Hannibal enter. He gave a small smile in greeting before looking at the books again.

Hannibal took that as permission, entering and moving closer, eyes scanning over the titles. “I have to admit,” he said, “the man may have been an overly stuffed nikuman, but he- or possibly his family- have managed to curate a rather impressive collection.”

"Probably his family," Will said. "He didn't really seem like a ‘book guy’."

“Quite possibly,” Hannibal agreed.

Will shrugged. "What's that saying? The first generation makes the money, the second generation saves the money, the third generation spends the money."

Hannibal huffed softly in what could be amusement before Will continued.

"Ah, here it is," Will said suddenly, smiling and pulling out a book.

Hannibal glanced at it. "Robert Frost?"

Will chuckled softly. "Yeah."

Hannibal’s eyebrows rose, but he didn’t question further, turning his attention to the books again.

Will tucked the book under his arm, smiling, then he glanced over the titles again. "Are you staying then?" he asked softly, almost too soft for Hannibal to hear.

Hannibal looked at him again. “I’d like to.”

Will smiled, though he tried to hide it with a duck of his head. "I'm glad…"

After a few more minutes, Will smiled at Hannibal and headed up to the main office where Duncan would be working through the files Will had brought him. "Guess what I found," he said, grinning as he set the book on the desk.

Duncan looked up, smiling as he pulled off his glasses. He picked up the book and laughed softly. “Robert Frost…”

Will sat on the corner of the desk, grinning at Duncan. "Yep."

“Now?” Duncan asked, raising an eyebrow at him.

Will laughed. "Not if you don't want to, I just went looking and found it."

Duncan reached over, pulling Will down into his lap, "Maybe tonight." He said softly, kissing him.

Will giggled, "Reading me bedtime stories now?"

Duncan gave Will’s ass a squeeze, making him squeak, "How else would I get you to sleep?"

Will grinned mischievously, "I could think of a few ways~" he said softly, his finger tugging at the collar of the black turtleneck Duncan wore.

"I'm sure you could," Duncan said, grinning back, "But not until your fully recovered."

Will pouted slightly, "But Duncan…"

Duncan put a finger to Will's lips to silence him, "I don't want to hurt you."

Will huffed softly, leaning up and biting the tip of the finger gently, "Fine…"

Duncan sighed, stroking Will's cheek lightly, "Thank you…"

Will grumbled softly, but he didn't press the subject, he curled against Duncan's chest and let himself relax.

The days went by as they slowly reassembled the agency known as Damocles, Will had joked they should rename it 'The Labrys', given how the former owner had passed, but Duncan disagreed.

"I like it," he assured Will, smiling, "but Damocles has a reputation, it would be better to build on that foundation than trying to rename and build from the ground up."

Will nodded, understanding what he meant, "Alright, we'll figure it out then."

Hannibal was in the library that Friday night when Will suddenly poked his head in. Hannibal had been going through the records and making sure they had an accurate catalog of all the valuable items in the mansion.

"Have you seen Duncan?" Will asked, looking around.

Hannibal looked up, smiling when he saw Will, though the smile froze in place at the question, and Will could see his mask coming up. "I have not."

Will nodded. "Alright." He disappeared again.

Hannibal returned to his work, letting his expression slip into something neutral and easier to maintain.

Will poked his head in again slowly. "You know what? Why don't you join us?"

"For?" Hannibal asked, not looking up.

"If you're going to be here, then you can join in the weekly ritual," Will insisted, beckoning.

Hannibal sighed, setting the ledger down on a desk and marking his place before letting himself be pulled along.

They found Duncan and moved to the den of the large house. Will started a fire and Duncan slipped out, returning with three glasses and a sealed bottle of scotch. The three of them

settled on the comfortable couch, each with a drink, staring at the fire and talking about this and that.

After a while, Duncan stood, saying he needed a smoke. After he left, Will slowly began to slump towards Hannibal. Hannibal shifted, draping his arm over Will's shoulders so they could be more comfortable.

Will snuggled against Hannibal's side with a soft sigh, enjoying the softness of Hannibal's sweater and humming softly. "Always liked your calone…" he murmured.

"I'm glad you approve," Hannibal said. "Perhaps now we can get you some new aftershave…?"

Will hummed softly. "Duncan got me some…" he murmured, "do you not like it?"

Hannibal turned his head, burying his nose in Will's curls and breathing in deeply. "It's better," he allowed. If Will wasn't so tipsy, he might be suspicious that Hannibal only didn't like it because Duncan had picked it.

"It doesn't have a ship on the bottle…" Will said softly, giggling slightly.

Hannibal hid a small smile, trying to enjoy the peace of the moment.

A soft chuckle came from nearby and Hannibal looked up to see Duncan, smiling at them. "He always does that," he said softly. "Cuddly drunk."

Will grumbled something that sounded like an insult, kicking his slipper off in Duncan's direction. Duncan caught it easily and moved closer, slipping it gently back on Will's foot. Will hummed softly in thanks before shifting to sit up again. Hannibal's hand twitched, wanting to hold Will there, not wanting to lose the cuddled warmth.

Before Will could move too far from Hannibal, Duncan sat again, closer than before, so Will was nestled in between them.

Will made a rather happy sound and snuggled down again "Now *this* is something I could get used to…" he mumbled, grinning. "Best kind of sandwich." He let out another tipsy giggle at his own joke.

Duncan chuckled softly, glancing at Hannibal over Will's head.

Will kept drinking his scotch, humming happily every now and then at the warmth and pressure of the two men beside him.

After another glass was emptied, Duncan turned slightly to face Will, glancing at Hannibal again with a gleam in his eye.

Hannibal raised an eyebrow slightly, but Duncan didn't respond, he simply leaned in and began kissing Will's neck gently.

Will giggled, squirming as Duncan's mustache tickled at his skin.

Hannibal’s mouth tightened, he was about to excuse himself from this display when Duncan pulled back enough to murmur.

"Will, we're being rude aren't we… we shouldn't be leaving Doctor Lecter out, should we?"

Will looked up at Hannibal and the psychiatrist froze at the warmth and contentment in Will’s eyes.

Will slipped from Duncan’s grip, pressing close and kissing at Hannibal's chin.

Hannibal’s fingers found Will’s curls, pulling him up into a deep kiss.

Will moaned softly, running his hands along the soft sweater gently.

Duncan gently reached around and began opening the buttons of Will’s shirt, kissing at Will's exposed shoulders and back.

Will whimpered softly, his warm sleepy mind trying to sort through the sensations.

They continued for a few beautiful moments, until Will yawned widely, making the other two chuckle.

Duncan pulled back, "I think you need some sleep, Will…"

Will nodded slightly, too content and warm to protest otherwise.

Duncan looked at Hannibal, "Do you want to take him?"

Hannibal blinked in surprise before nodding and gathering the lax ex-profiler into his arms and carrying him up to the room Will had taken as his.

Will curled against Hannibal's chest as he walked, murmuring sleepily, "I'm glad you stayed… Hannibal…"

"I… am as well, Will." Hannibal said around the sudden lump in his throat as he laid him in the bed and tucked the blanket around him.

Will hummed softly and snuggled down in the blanket, by the time Hannibal reached the door, he was snoring away softly.

A few days later, Abigail and the dogs had joined them and Abigail was soon being trained by Doris to help run things.

Will came in for breakfast and found Duncan and Hannibal talking softly.

"Good morning," Will said, smiling at them. "We have a prospective interview today, right?"

Hannibal looked up and nodded. "Yes. A rather promising candidate; he sought us out, wanting to make a name for himself, but he has an impressive resume."

"Assassins don't make 'names for themselves'," Duncan said softly, "unless you're bad at the job."

“Or really, really good at it,” Will pointed out. “You did, after all.”

Duncan’s frown deepened. “Not intentionally.”

Will shrugged, "True… though, I guess your 'name' isn't out there. The Black Kaiser is."

"And only in… certain circles," Hannibal added, looking at Duncan.

Duncan shrugged and hummed slightly, then they moved to have breakfast.

Later, they moved to the office to wait for the man, they had decided early on that Will would be the one to choose new agents and conduct the interviews and such, he had been speaking with Vivian and working out the details of that, Duncan and Hannibal both seemed to like Will being the head of the organization and didn't try to say much against his decisions unless they truly disagreed.

After a few minutes, the door was opened and the candidate strutted in, grinning cockily. He had messy dark blonde, almost brown, hair, blue gray eyes, and thick eyebrows. [Actor sauce- chace crawford]

The man's slight smirk made Will instantly dislike him, but he kept his face smooth.

"Welcome," Will said softly, gesturing to the open chair, "please, have a seat."

The man stopped for a moment before moving to the chair.

"Thank you, Doris." Duncan said, smiling at the older secretary who smiled back and closed the door behind her.

"So," Will began, "what makes you want to join Damocles?"

The man was silent for a moment before replying- to Duncan- "I wanted to get my name out there, I can do this work, I would be good at it. And I would like to work for a company that is well known."

Will nodded slightly, looking at the man's resume again, "It says that… you were special ops for a few years, may I ask what you did?"

Again, the man answered to Duncan and not Will, "Seals for five years, then I switched over to the Rangers for another seven."

"Alright, what would you say your-" Will begin.

"Ok, look," the man said, cutting over Will as he folded his arms and looked at them, "Can we just cut the games? Which one of you actually runs this, I'll talk to them."

Will looked at the other two before looking at the man again, "I am the one conducting this interview. What would you say your best skill is?"

The man frowned, seeming to not buy it.

"Please answer the question." Will said softly.

"I'll talk to whoever is in charge." The man said again, as if he thought they hadn't heard him.

"I am conducting this interview." Will said again, "Please answer the question."

The man shook his head, "Who are you anyways?" He asked, finally looking at Will, "Why are you here?"

Will raised an eyebrow slightly, "I am one of the heads of this company, if you do not wish to continue, then please see yourself out." He could feel the tension building in the men on either side of him, like a spring being compressed, ready to snap forward at any moment.

"God, this is bullshit!" The man snarled, "I thought this was a *reputable agency.* If I knew a twink was running this, I wouldn't have even bothered!"

It happened so fast, Will barely had time to blink. The man and his chair flew backwards as Hannibal's leg flew up in a high kick before settling on his opposite knee as if nothing had happened.

Will took a moment as the man floundered to take a deep breath and steady himself, "Thank you for the application," he said softly, standing, "but I don't believe we will be hiring you at this time."

The man snarled, jumping from the floor and lunging at Will.

Duncan was there in an instant, gun out and pointed at the man's head.

The man froze a moment before growling, "You wouldn't dare old man."

Duncan didn't speak, only pulled the hammer back.

"I'll give you a bit of advice." Will smiled pleasantly, "there are all kinds of people that can do this work. Hurling insults to try and seem tough… isn't how you make a name for yourself, at least, not a positive one. Now, please leave."

The man glared at Will again, "I'm ready for this job." He snarled, "Now let me speak to who is *really* in charge!"

Will sighed, "I already told you who that was, if you choose to continue like this, then you will be leaving in a body bag instead."

The man finally seemed to realize that they weren't bluffing, Will saw fear flicker in the man's eyes before he straightened up, tugging his shirt straight and growled "No one would

want to work for this shit company anyways. Just wait, I'll show you." He left, growling and grumbling threats and declarations the whole way.

Will sighed softly, sitting again, "Well… that wasn't what I expected…"

Duncan huffed softly, putting the gun away, “I will never understand people like that…”

Will nodded, shaking himself slightly, “Thank you… both of you…”

Hannibal and Duncan nodded.

“Of course, Will.” Hannibal said softly.

“Any time.” Duncan agreed.

“Do we have any more applicants today?” Will asked, the others shook their heads and Will nodded, “Good… I could use a drink after that…”

Hannibal and Duncan looked at each other before smiling.

“May we join you?” Hannibal asked.

“Better to drink with good company.” Duncan nodded.

Will was surprised, but he nodded, “Sure, we could have a drink in the den.”

Soon enough, the three sat on the couch, much like they had Friday… almost…

Duncan had guided Will to the center of the couch and he and Hannibal sat close on either side.

Will was surprised, but he definitely didn't dislike it.

They sipped from their drinks, talking about how they could maybe screen applicants beforehand somehow to avoid having issues like that again.

“Given the job, all the applicants are dangerous.” Will sighed, “It's a matter of self control…”

Duncan nodded slightly, “There's always going to be loose cannons… but if we can weed them out beforehand, then all the better.”

Hannibal nodded, “There are certain things we can look for in their records, traits and signs in their past that give indications.”

Will chuckled softly as he drank, “Yes, let's psychoanalyze them.”

Hannibal chuckled himself at the reminder of their beginnings.

They continued for a while before the talking died down and they simply watched the fire in the fireplace and drank.

Will slowly registered the warm hand resting on his thigh and blinked owlishly down at it, following the arm up to look at Hannibal.

Hannibal smiled at him and squeezed Will's thigh gently.

Will gasped, but then Duncan was pressing closer and nosing at his jaw.

Will shivered slightly, he had wanted this, but he had thought it would never happen with the two older men not being able to get along.

"Is this alright, Will?" Hannibal asked softly.

Will nodded weakly before realizing that the two men would want verbal consent.

"Y-Yeah, please… yes…"

Duncan and Hannibal smiled slightly at each other before Duncan scooped Will up, "Then let's go."

It only took Will a few minutes to figure out that Duncan and Hannibal had planned this together.

The room they took him to had the biggest bed in the mansion, a lot of lube, water bottles, and several things that Duncan had used for Will's aftercare that had worked best. Things like soft blankets, lavender oil, and of course, the man himself.

Hannibal and Duncan laid Will out, Duncan started using the lube, opening Will up, knowing the best places to press and stroke to make Will moan.

Hannibal settled by Will's head, gently massaging his neck and shoulders, making Will want to sink away into the mattress.

"Will…" Duncan said softly, "Don't drift too far. We need you here, alright?"

Will managed a moan of "Yes…"

Duncan nodded, "Good Boy." He said softly, then continued opening him up.

After Will was opened up and Duncan had checked what color Will stoplight was, Hannibal and Duncan positioned him on the bed on his back, his head hanging off the side, taking Hannibal's cock in his mouth as Duncan started gently thrusting in and out.

Will moaned around Hannibal's cock as the duel sensations sparked across his mind. Hannibal moaned himself, bucking his hips before stilling at the sound of Will's soft gag.

Will had gotten pretty good at giving oral, he enjoyed it if he was honest, but Hannibal, like Duncan, was in no way "average" and as well as Will could take it, while also being pushed forward by Duncan's thrusts, it was a bit much.

They continued for a bit before Duncan stopped and pulled back, Hannibal following suit.

Will whined at the loss, but Duncan ran a hand over his legs and Will calmed.

They switched places, Hannibal slowly pressing into Will's soft heat as Duncan took his mouth, running his fingers through Will's curls as he did.

Will moaned, shifting his hips to take the thrusts as he licked at Duncan's cock.

"So needy," Duncan said softly with a chuckle.

Will whined again, trying to press closer to both of them at once.

"Hannibal." Duncan said softly, surprising Will, as he hadn't heard Duncan call Hannibal by his first name.

Hannibal stilled and pulled back, helping Duncan move Will around again.

Now, Duncan lay on the bed, Will on his hands and knees over him, and Hannibal pressed to Will's back.

Will was about to ask what was happening, when he felt both of them begin to press into him.

For a long moment, Will's mind forget what breathing was, then, when he got enough brain cells functioning properly to manage a soft, "Oh god-" they began thrusting.

If he *could* manage to think, Will would have been impressed by their coordination, thrusting in turns to make sure Will's prostate was continually battered and his mind a pure explosion of pleasure.

Duncan smiled, he loved Will's sounds, and now that Will's mind was… otherwise occupied, Will couldn't try to hold anything back.

Hannibal was smiling to as he kissed Will's neck gently, adding more sensation to the already overloaded Will.

It didn't take long for Will to cum with an all out scream as he collapsed on Duncan's chest, his body squeezing around Hannibal and Duncan, milking their orgasms out as well.

Duncan hushed the shivering Will gently, stroking his curls and cheeks, wiping away the sweat and tears. Hannibal pulled back and helped Duncan clean Will up and wrap him in the soft blanket.

Duncan pulled Will close, wrapping an arm around him protectively. But as Hannibal moved to stand, Duncan caught his arm and pulled him down on the bed too.

Hannibal was going to protest, but Will sighed, feeling both of their weight so close, he relaxed and his eyes slowly cleared.

"Are you with us, Will?" Duncan asked softly.

Will hummed happily and nodded, “Yeah…” he managed, horsley after his scream, “Thank you… both of you…”

Duncan smiled and looked at Hannibal.

Hannibal found himself smiling back, “Of course, Will… anything for you.”

“Anything.” Duncan agreed.

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